the PARIS REVIEW

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François MAURIAC an interview

Richard Wilbur

Simone Weil

Richard Eberhart

Eight drawings by Bernard Buffet

Short Stories

Poetry

Commentaries

SUMMER *1953*

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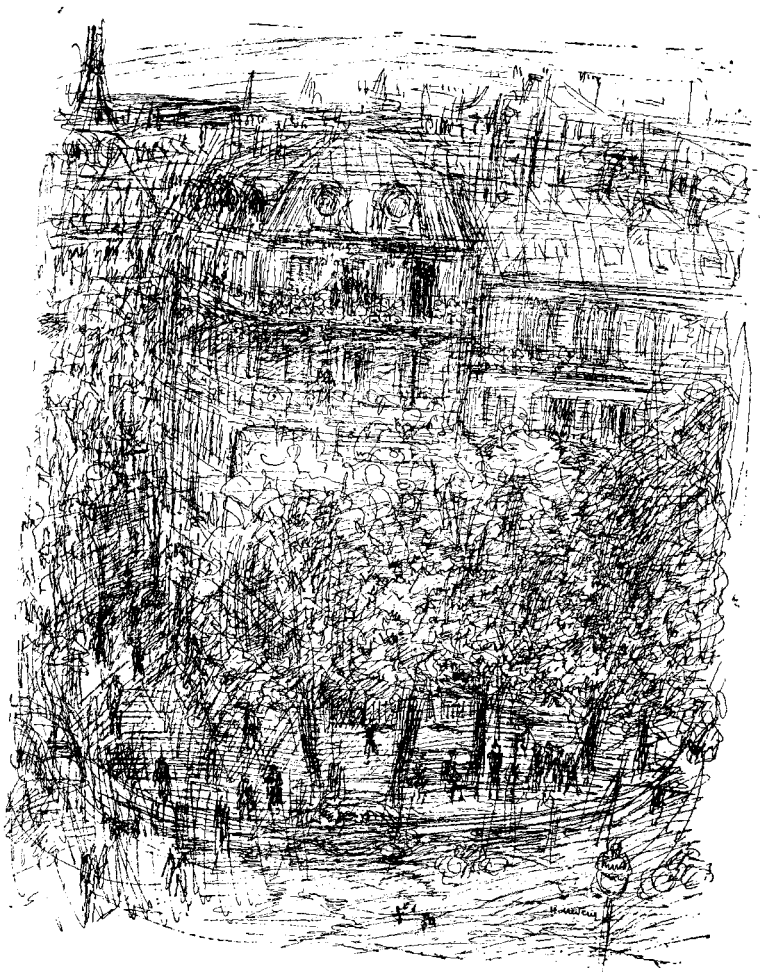

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THE PARIS REVIEW

Published quarterly by La Table Ronde

8, rue Garancière, PARIS-6e

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The Paris Review is published four times a year by the Paris Review, Société à Responsabilité Limitée au capital de 500.000 frs, 8 Rue Garancière, Paris, France, under the auspices of La Table Ronde; 75 cents, 4 shillings, 200 francs a copy; 3 dollars, 16 shillings, or 800 francs for an annual subscription. For payment in francs in non-European countries: 1000 francs for an annual subscription. Postal cheque number in France: 9749-63. Vol 1, N° 2. Numero de presse 26.295. June issue for summer, 1953. Publication office, 8 Rue Garancière, Paris 6, France. Editorial and distribution offices, 2 Columbus Circle, New York 19, N. Y. Distributed in the U.S.A. by the Eastern News Company. Representative in England: Thomas Baring, 55 Welbeck Street, London W. 1. Application for entry as second class matter is pending. Printed in France.

All fiction manuscripts from the U. S. A. should be submitted to Peter Matthiessen, c/o the New York editorial offices; all poetry manuscripts to Donald Hall, c/o the New York editorial offices; art to William Pène du Bois c/o the Paris editorial offices. No responsibility can be taken for manuscripts not accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelopes (or by International Postage coupons, available at any post-office).

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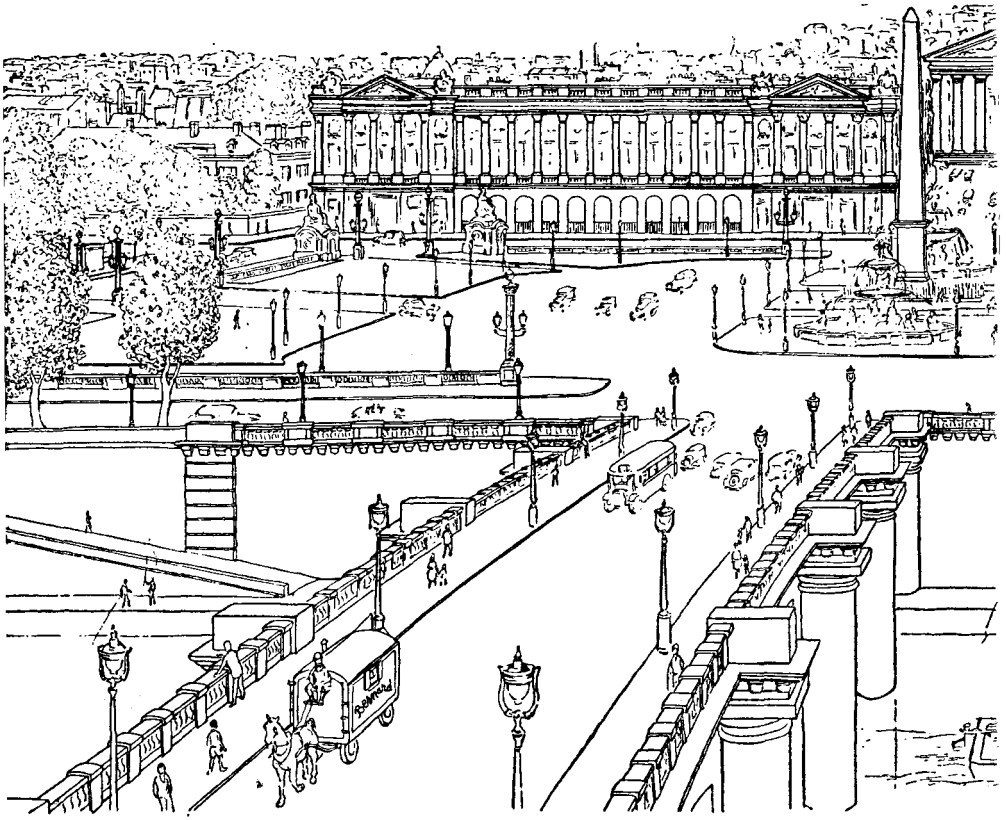

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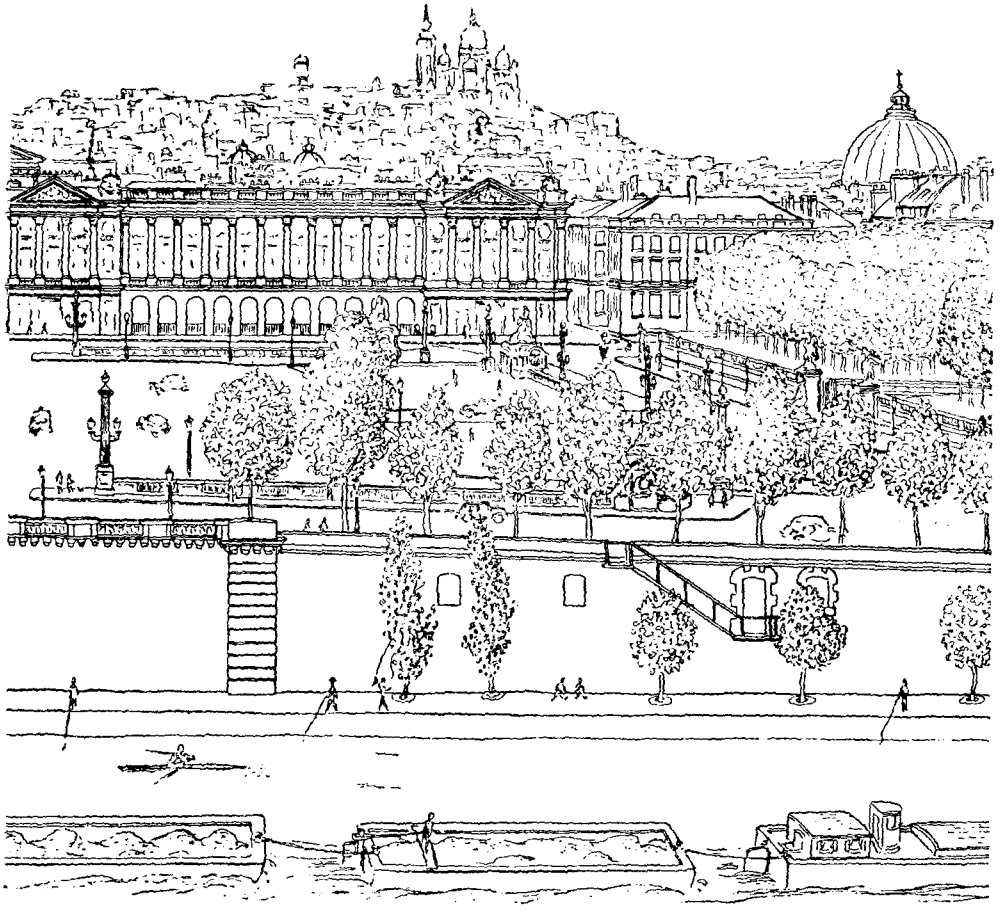

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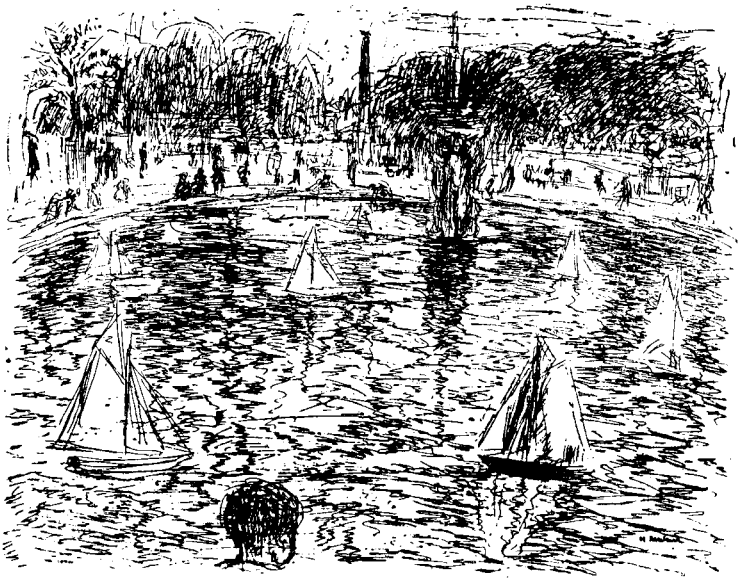

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IN ERRATUM — Terry Southern is most anxious that *The Paris Review* point out the absence of two words from his story *The Accident* (issue one): the sentence "Don't get hot" *should* have read "Don't get *your crap* hot," an omission for which we apologize to all concerned.

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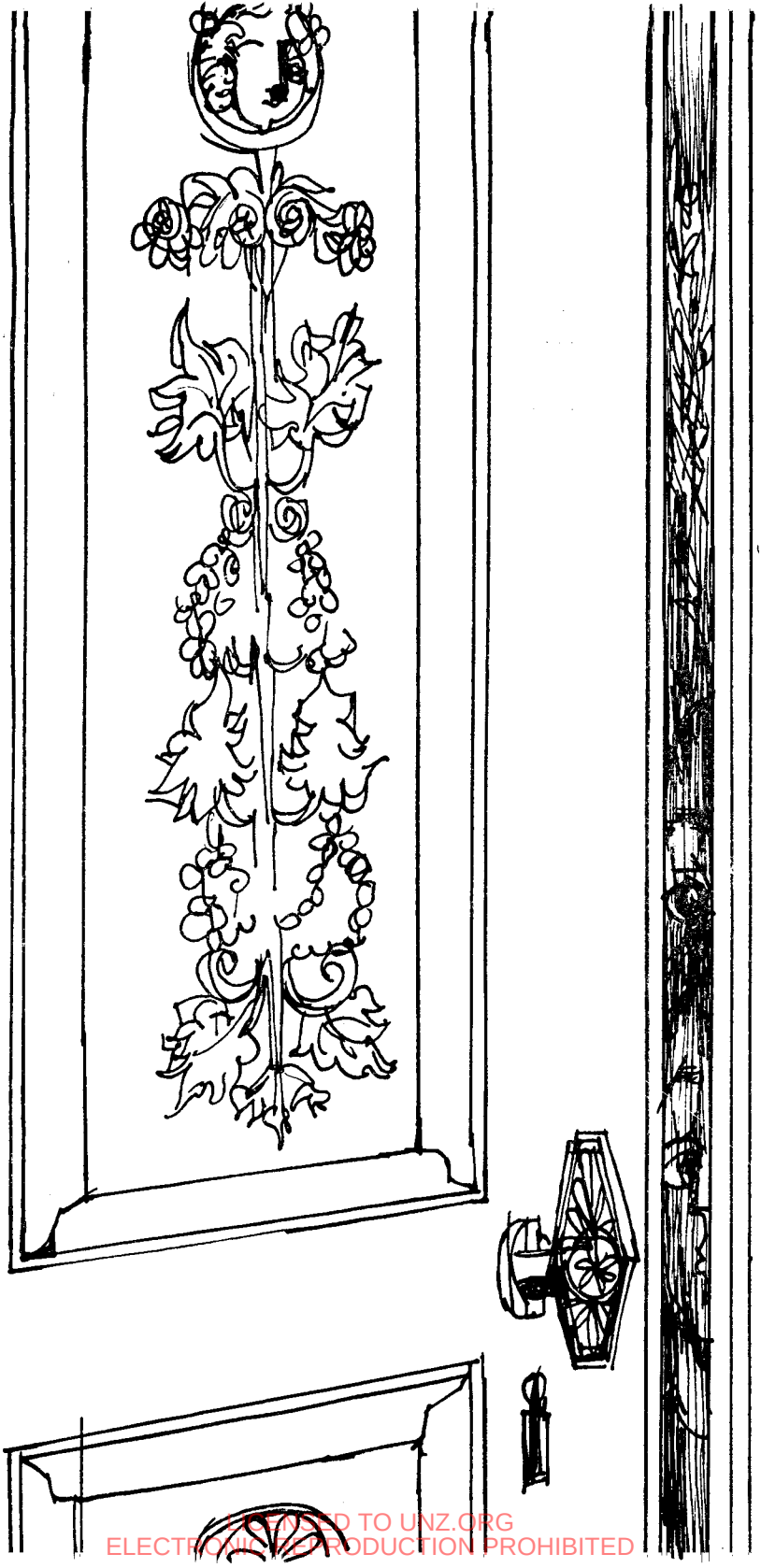

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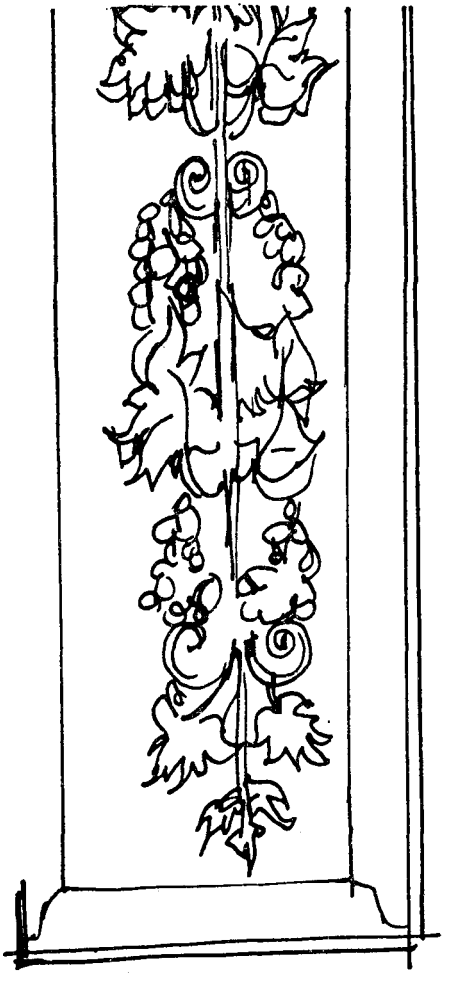
JAMES TOMMANEY

THE MOTHER



HARRY and Allen left the keyhole and tiptoed down the hall to where their shoes were. Neither one said anything until they reached the foot of the curving staircase and sat down to put their shoes back on. Then the older one, who was eleven, spoke.

—I'm hungry, Harry said.

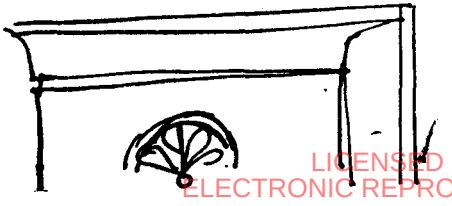
—We shouldn't watch, Allen said.

—They shouldn't do it, Harry said.

—That's what they mean in school, Allen said. That's the commandment they skip when they come to it.

Harry finished tying his shoes, rubbing them to remove white scuff-marks, and stood up.

—Don't mind what they say in school, he said. Do you have any money?



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—Mother wouldn't give me any this morning, Allen said. What do you want it for?

—Ice cream, but we can't get it until Mother comes down. Where's Uncle Edward?

—He went to the library, Allen said.

—Let's go into the kitchen, Harry said. Maybe Cook is out.

The cook turned when they came in, large and impatient, her face red against the white of her uniform.

—No, she said, before you ask.

—We weren't going to ask anything, Harry said.

—That's a change, she said. I'm busy.

—We were going to tell you, Harry said. Mother said to give us a sandwich to hold us over until dinner.

—Where is your mother? she said.

—Upstairs, Harry said. Dr. Norton is seeing her.

—Don't tell, Allen whispered.

—Is she sick again? Cook said.

—Just not feeling well, I think, said Harry. Before Dr. Norton came Mother said to give us some sandwiches.

—If you're lying I'll find out, Cook said.

—Not peanut butter, Harry said. Unless we get soda, too.

—You'll get peanut butter and milk and like it, Cook said.

—We won't like it, Allen said.

—You're getting like your brother, Cook said. I have troubles enough of my own without your dissatisfactions.

—What trouble? Allen asked.

—Cook isn't happy, Harry said.

—There's no need to discuss me, Cook said. If you want these sandwiches behave yourselves.

—Cook says the world is bad, Harry said.

—There's no place in it for an honest soul, Cook said. You'll find out when you get a little older.

—When I'm eleven? Allen said. Will I find out then?

—God help us, no, Cook said. Take these.

—We'll eat them in the yard, Harry said.

Allen followed him out the door to the square plot behind the house.

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—Is Cook right? Allen said.

—She never asks Mother about it, Harry said. She won't find out.

—No, Allen said. About the world being bad.

—What does she know about it? Harry said. I'll ask Mother tonight.

They sat on the steps to the yard, the wood polished by the sun and Cook until it was so clean and white that they could and often did eat their sandwiches off it.

—We shouldn't watch, Allen said.

—That's what you said last time, Harry said.

—What if Cook sees us? Allen said.

—Don't watch, then, Harry said.

—No, Allen said. We'll just have to be careful of Cook, that's all.

—I wish Mother would come down, Harry said.

Allen didn't say anything.

—You go upstairs and ask her for ice cream, Harry said.

—I asked her once today, Allen said. You ask her.

—You asked her for money before, Harry said. Now ask her for ice cream.

—She'll say we can have it for dessert, Allen said.

—That's no good, Harry said. I want it now.

—Why don't you go? Allen said.

—You're younger, Harry said. You'll get it easier.

Allen got up, brushing the crumbs from himself to the steps.

—Knock, Harry said. Knock and say please.

—All right, Allen said.

He returned in a few minutes. Harry watched him as he sat down in silence.

—Did you say please? Harry demanded.

—Yes, Allen said. It's too near dinner-time.

—That's not the reason. You did something wrong.

—No, I didn't, Allen said.

—We always get ice cream after Dr. Norton comes, Harry said. You did something wrong.

—I'm sorry, Allen said. The door was open so I didn't knock.

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—What was she doing? Harry asked.

—Just looking out the window, Allen said. I made her jump when I came in.

—You should've knocked, Harry said.

—I'm sorry, Allen said.

—That's all right, Harry said. It's her fault.

Harry wandered around the yard, gathering stones to throw at the fence.

—What'll we do now? Allen asked.

—We'll write an anonymous letter, Harry said.

—What for? Allen said.

—They always do, Harry said. That's how you get even.

—Let's not, Allen said.

—It's all right, Harry said. You don't sign it.

—They'd find out, Allen said.

—No, Harry said. We'll use Cook's stationery.

—Cook's in there, Allen said.

The stones rattled off the wooden boards, punctuating his responses as he answered Allen without looking at him.

—I think I heard her leave, Harry said. Take the glasses back and if she isn't there get the stationery.

—I don't know where it is, Allen said.

—It's on the low table in her room, Harry said. Just take one piece and an envelope and she won't notice it.

—You do it this time, Allen said.

—If we get caught it's both of us, Harry said.

—I know, Allen said.

Harry returned in a few minutes with the writing materials. He knelt on the dirt, using the steps for his desk.

—I borrowed her pen, too, Harry said. You've got to return it.

—No, Allen said. You know where it came from. You put it back in the same place.

—You're arguing too much today, Harry said. Didn't I get you the sandwiches?

—I'll watch while you put it back, Allen said. I'll tell you if Cook comes.

—We'll see, Harry said.

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—Who shall we write to? Allen asked.

—To Father, Harry said.

—I thought we were going to get even with Mother, Allen said.

—Yes, Harry said. It's *about* Mother, but it's *to* Father.

—What shall we say? Allen asked.

—We'll tell about Dr. Norton, Harry said.

Harry moved the unfamiliar pen awkwardly over the cream-colored paper.

—We'd better not, Allen said. They'll know we've been watching.

—It's on Cook's stationery, Harry said. They'll think she was watching.

—Cook will blame us, Allen said.

—They won't believe her if it's on her stationery, Harry said. They'll fire her.

—We have no stamp, Allen said.

Allen stood over Harry's shoulder, alternating his attention between the kitchen door and the letter.

—We'll put it among Father's letters on his desk, Harry said. I'll do that and you can return the pen.

—They'll recognize your writing, Allen said.

—I'm printing, Harry said. They always print in this kind of letter.

—You'll make Father mad, Allen said. You know what he's like when he's mad.

—I'll just tell part of it, Harry said. I'll read to you what I write.

—Dear Mr. Banks, he read.

—That's good, Allen said. I wouldn't have thought of that.

—I must inform you...

—They always start that way, he added.

—That Dr. Norton takes off his clothes in Mother's room.

—Even that will get him mad, Allen said.

—Signed A Friend, Harry finished. That will make him think of Cook.

—He's going to be mad, Allen repeated.

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—Not at us, Harry said. Just at Cook. Now bring the pen back.

As they were leaving the dining-room Allen pulled Harry aside, allowing their parents and Edward, their mother's brother, to enter. Edward walked with a slight limp, and carried a cane.

—We had ice cream for dessert, Allen said.

—I know, Harry said. It was good. Why didn't you tell me we were going to have it?

—I didn't know, Allen said. Mother didn't tell me.

—It's too late now, Harry said. This will have to be getting even for next time.

—Maybe we can get the letter back, Allen said.

They went into the library and looked at the desk.

—They're gone, Allen said.

—Father's brought them into the living-room, Harry said. He's probably reading it now.

They went down the hall and stood in the doorway.

—They're by the radio, Harry said. He's reading the paper first.

—We can't get it now, Allen said.

—No, Harry said. Mother should have told us about the ice cream.

They entered the room, and stood in the middle of the rug, waiting for the older people to become aware of them.

—Ask Mother about what Cook said, Allen asked.

—You mean about the world? Harry said.

—Yes, Allen said. Ask her first if what Cook said was right, and then ask her when I'll find out.

—All right, Harry agreed.

They stretched out on the rug, Harry facing his mother.

—Father's finished the paper, Allen said.

—Mother, Harry said.

Mrs. Banks turned toward him.

—Mother, is the world *good*? he asked.

Allen watched his father read the letter, and turned uneasily toward Harry.

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—It is for children, dear, Mrs. Banks said, before turning back to her husband.

—Edward, would you take Harry and Allen from the room? Mr. Banks said.

The children rose from the floor to follow Edward, Allen clinging to Harry's hand.

Mr. Banks pulled shut the sliding doors, and then returned to his seat and picked up the letter.

—You must wonder why I sent the children from the room, Mr. Banks said.

—It is a wonder soon satisfied, Mrs. Banks said. You will tell me in a moment.

—I have received a letter, Sarah, Mr. Banks said.

—That is not unusual, is it ? Mrs. Banks said.

—The letter pertains to you, Mr. Banks said.

—Indeed. Of what am I accused, Henry? Mrs. Banks said.

—Do you think yourself open to accusation, Sarah?

—We are all open to accusation, Mrs. Banks said. Innocence is no guard against that.

—Why did you think I was about to accuse you? Mr. Banks said.

—Because you *are* about to accuse me and because it is apparent that the letter has already done that, Mrs. Banks said. You are calm, Henry, and that means that you think you are in the right. When you suspect that you are wrong, you grow violent. The calm is most unusual.

—I am calm because I am grieved, Mr. Banks said. I have been hurt by this letter.

—I did not think that possible, Mrs. Banks said. What is in this remarkable letter?

—I hesitate to tell you, because I cannot believe the accusation, Mr. Banks said. I tell you only that I may await your denial.

—You do not believe it, and yet you are grieved by it? Mrs. Banks asked.

Mr. Banks rose to his feet, smoothing out and buttoning his double-breasted coat.

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—It is a terrible accusation, Mr. Banks said. It states that you and Norton conduct an affair within my very house, that he comes as both physician and lover.

—I do not think that such a terrible accusation, Mrs. Banks said.

Her voice was quiet, and she folded her hands in her lap without altering the patience of her glance as it fell on Mr. Banks.

—I am astonished that you do not think so, Mr. Banks said. I await your denial.

—I cannot give you a denial, Mrs. Banks said. Except that he comes primarily as a lover; my health is good.

—You feel nothing? Mr. Banks said. You feel no regret, no remorse?

—I feel regret, Mrs. Banks said. I regret that the affair is of course over, and that I have not been able to say goodbye as I might have wished.

—I can imagine what that would be, Mr. Banks said.

—I do not think you can, Mrs. Banks said.

—Is that to be all? Mr. Banks said. Am I to forget what has happened?

—You are not capable of forgetting, Mrs. Banks said. Your questions mean: What revenge am I to have?

—That is one interpretation, Mr. Banks said. And your answer?

—You shall have to find your own revenge, Mrs. Banks said. I shall not help you.

Mr. Banks looked around the room, allowing his eyes to rest upon two plaster angels who guarded the door, as though calling upon them for sustenance.

—Why have you done this? Mr. Banks said. In what way have I failed you?

—You think it is I who have failed you, Mrs. Banks said.

—You think it presumptuous of me to be indignant? Mr. Banks said.

—You asked in what way you failed; that was not being indignant, Mrs. Banks said. That was a creditable way of acting. Unfortunately, acting was what it was.

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—Why have you done this? Mr. Banks repeated.

—I shall only say that I love him, Mrs. Banks said. I shall say that his name is John, and that I find it easy to love someone named John.

—John is the most common of all names, Mr. Banks said.

—Yes, Mrs. Banks said. That *was* convenient.

Mr. Banks sank down in the cushioned sofa, his suit ugly against the flowered pattern.

—I am old, Mr. Banks said. That is the reason.

—You are forty, Mrs. Banks said. And I am thirty-five.

—And he is not even that, Mr. Banks said. I cannot blame you.

—Indeed you could, if that were the reason, Mrs. Banks said.

—I cannot change my age, Mr. Banks said.

—You could have prevented your age from changing you, Mrs. Banks said.

Mr. Banks rose from his chair, and this time Mrs. Banks rose with him.

—I am not to be put in the wrong, Mr. Banks said. You must be made to see that you have betrayed me.

—You are not going to pretend that your revenge is a moral lesson? Mrs. Banks said.

—In your passion you have not thought of your family, Mr. Banks said. You have forgotten your obligation to your husband and children. You must be reminded of it.

Mr. Banks left the room in awkward haste.

Edward had taken the children to the library. The desk was neat, and the shelves, the chairs and even the dust testified to the establishment of an order.

—Well, what have you been doing today? Mr. Banks said.

—We played in the yard for a while, Harry said. That's what we usually do.

—You played like gentlemen, I hope, Mr. Banks said. You did not torment Allen?

—It is not I who torment him, Harry said.

—I am glad to hear that, Mr. Banks said. I wonder if you

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can help me. I received an unsigned letter today, and thought perhaps you could suggest who might have sent it.

—We did not send any letters today, Harry said.

—I did not ask if you had, Mr. Banks said. I asked if you could suggest who might have sent it.

—I can think of no one, Harry said.

—Can you think of anyone, Allen? Mr. Banks said.

—Perhaps it was Cook, Allen said.

—What makes you think it was Cook? Mr. Banks said.

—He didn't say that he thought it was Cook, Harry said. He said that perhaps it was Cook.

Edward watched from the doorway, tapping his cane from side to side as Mr. Banks altered his interrogations.

—Let him answer for himself, Mr. Banks said. What made you think it was Cook, Allen?

—I didn't think so, Allen said. I said that perhaps it was Cook.

—Why did you think it was someone in the house? Mr. Banks said.

—There was no stamp, Allen said. It could not have come from the outside.

—Then you have seen the letter ? Mr. Banks said.

—No, Allen said.

—Then how did you know there was no stamp?

Allen did not answer.

—Do not make me repeat my question, Allen, Mr. Banks said.

—We noticed the letter lying on your desk, Harry said. There could not be two unstamped letters on the same day. He thought that the unstamped letter was the unsigned one.

—Yes, said Allen. That is what I did.

—This has gone far enough, Edward said. The children are obviously lying, and you encourage it. What is in this letter they have written?

—I am afraid they are lying, Mr. Banks said. I hoped they would repent and tell the truth. But disrespect is as bad as lying. Do not forget that you are a guest here, and I am their father.

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—I am not capable of forgetting either fact, Edward said. But what is in this letter?

—It accuses your sister of adultery, Mr. Banks said. She has not denied the accusation.

Edward's cane came to a halt, and the sudden silence seemed to echo throughout the room.

—Why have you said this before the children? Edward asked.

—They are the ones who informed me of it, Mr. Banks said. It is they who have written the letter, and it is the letter which contains this information.

—How did you know they had written it? Edward said.

—I shall read the letter, Mr. Banks said. "I must inform you that Dr. Norton takes off his clothes in Mother's room." They have tripped themselves up. You should not have said *Mother*, Allen.

—How did they find out? Edward said.

—That is why I am questioning them, Mr. Banks said.

—They must have heard gossip, Edward said.

—Perhaps it was more direct than that, Mr. Banks said. They seem to have first-hand information.

—You could not say that, Edward said. You could not even think it.

—*Do* not say it, he added.

—I must get to the truth of this matter, Mr. Banks said. Allen, how did you find out?

—If you will leave Allen alone, I'll tell you, Harry said.

—It does not matter who tells me, Mr. Banks said. So long as it is the truth.

—We watched, Harry said. The door was open a crack one day and we could not help seeing. After that it was the keyhole.

—I hope only that *they* can forget, Edward said.

—At last, Mr. Banks said. You see what unpleasantness is caused by lying. Now both of you go to your room.

—It is horrible, Edward said. They shall come to know what it means. It cannot be prevented.

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—Yes, Mr. Banks said. They must be made aware of the existence of sin. Tomorrow is time enough.

—It is like being caned, Edward said. I think that I can bear no more and that surely you have finished, but there is always one more. But now you *have* finished.

—And your sister must be made aware of what she has done to the family, Mr. Banks said. I shall tell her that the children have been watching.

—I should have known, Edward said. There is always the one more.

Mr. Banks returned to the living-room, again pulling the doors shut behind him.

—So that is your revenge, Mrs. Banks said. You have been telling Edward what I have done.

—No, Mr. Banks said. I have been finding out the source of the letter.

—That is not what you have been doing; you have not left the house, Mrs. Banks said. It is not enough. Edward will side with me.

Mr. Banks stood framed in the doorway, the plaster angels guarding his sides.

—The children of course are too young to understand, Mr. Banks said.

—If you have told them I shall leave you, Mrs. Banks said. You have gone too far.

Mr. Banks gave her the letter.

—I told them nothing, Mr. Banks said. He watched her read it once, then begin again with disbelief.

—It is they who have told me, he said.

—It does not sound like gossip, she whispered.

—I wish I could say they knew from gossip, Mr. Banks said. They have been watching you. You and Norton.

She turned and buried her face in her arms, her back shaking from the sobs.

—I am sorry, Mr. Banks said. But at least you have repented.

. . .

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The tears had dried on Mrs. Banks' cheeks when Edward entered her bedroom. He stood motionless and silent at the foot of the bed.

—There is nothing to be said, is there? Mrs. Banks said. She had not turned to face him.

—Yes, Edward said. There are things to be said. I am going to say that you will forget this, although you will not believe me.

—You are right, Mrs. Banks said. I do not believe you.

—It seems intolerable that your children have watched you in adultery, Edward said. It is a horror perhaps beyond the capacity of thought.

—Do not put it in words, Mrs. Banks said. For I have not yet faced the thought.

—That is the first step in forgetting, Edward said. For it is certainly a horror beyond the capacity of words.

Mrs. Banks raised herself to one elbow, tiredly, her brown dress looking old and dull against the organdy of the spread.

—Each day will be a remembrance that what I have done has shaped their lives, Mrs. Banks said. There can be no forgetting.

—What is intolerable is the effect on them, Edward said. But this is something which you will forget in remembrance of the effect on you. It shall become tolerable when you come to think only of yourself.

—That can never be, Mrs. Banks said.

—It may have already occurred, Edward said. That is human nature.

—You say this to comfort me, Mrs. Banks said. But how can I forget when I must face them tomorrow ? What mask can I adopt ?

—No mask is necessary, Edward said. And I do not say it to comfort you, for you will not believe it until it is in the past. I say it because it is true, a selfish reason. That is my one accomplishment, to speak the truth.

—How will they look at me? Mrs. Banks said. What will they say?

—I am too weak for lies, Edward said. If you want com-

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fort you must go to a stronger person.

She turned to face him for the first time.

—That is what I have done, she said. That is what has led to this.

Edward spoke more gently.

—I'm sorry, he said. I did not understand.

—It is now that I need him, Mrs. Banks said. I have driven myself only to a greater need, one that I must not satisfy.

—It is your decision; Edward said.

—I had not thought there was a choice, Mrs. Banks said.

—It is not to be made now, at any rate, Edward said. I shall return tomorrow, when you will know that all this is in the past.

The children were seated at the breakfast table when Edward joined them.

—Good morning, Edward said.

—What's good about it? Allen said.

—I have noticed before that you lack originality; you imitate, Edward said. You must also lack a critical taste, for you repeat inferior remarks.

—He's still learning, Harry said.

—I gather that it is from you that he is learning, Edward said.

—We're often together, Harry said. He may pick up a few things from me.

—Good morning, Mr. Banks said.

—Yes, it is, Harry said.

—It is what ? Mr. Banks said.

—It is morning, Harry said.

—I should think that could go without saying, Mr. Banks said.

—And yet *you* have said it, Allen said.

—What is this? Mr. Banks said. Edward, are you responsible? It cannot be impromptu.

—I had criticized Allen for his inferior wit, Edward said. They are attempting to prove my criticism unwarranted.

—Yes, we are, Harry said.

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—That is enough, Mr. Banks said. Wit is not essential to a gentleman. What is essential is respect for others.

—Yes, it is, Allen said.

—Do not repeat that phrase again, either of you, Mr. Banks said.

—No, we won't, Harry said.

—I was right, Edward said. It is you that he imitates.

—He's improving, Harry said.

—Yes, I am, Allen said.

—Leave the table, Allen, Mr. Banks said. Return when you can control yourself.

—Yes, I will, Allen said.

Harry laughed.

—Do you admire his conduct? Mr. Banks said. Whether you do or not, do not answer in that phrase.

—I find it amusing, Harry said.

—Would you like to join him? Mr. Banks said.

—I find that he has joined *us*, Harry said.

—Why have you returned? Mr. Banks said.

—I hope to have control of myself, Allen said.

—Return when there is no doubt of the matter, Mr. Banks said.

—The doubt has disappeared, Allen said.

Mrs. Banks entered, and they turned to greet her. She watched the children calmly, without betraying her apprehensions.

—Good morning, Mrs. Banks said.

—Good morning, Harry and Allen answered.

—I see that you receive a courtesy which is not given to me, Mr. Banks said. My greeting was answered with mockery.

—Perhaps that is too strong a word, Mrs. Banks said. I am sure it was only a joke.

—It showed a lack of respect, Mr. Banks said.

—Perhaps it did show that, Mrs. Banks murmured.

—I had charged Allen with inferior wit, Edward said. He was only attempting to refute the charge. There was no personal animosity.

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—Am I to be grateful for that? Mr. Banks said.

—That is up to you, Edward said. Unless you want my advice.

—And what would that be? Mr. Banks said.

—That you *are* to be grateful, Edward said.

—Edward, Mrs. Banks said.

—This *is* a pleasant meal, Mr. Banks said. While I eat I am insulted by my children and a guest. I am sorry to have to cut it short.

Mr. Banks drank his coffee, and they waited until he had left.

—He asks too much, Edward said. It is not possible that we like him.

—You should hide it, Mrs. Banks said. He has feelings like anyone else.

—Yes, he has, Allen said.

—I doubt that they are like anyone else's, Edward said. I am sure they are unique.

—You have done well, Allen, Harry said.

—Yes, I have, Allen said.

—It has gone to your head, Edward said. You are acquiring an undue arrogance.

—Yes, I am, Allen said.

—Is that the way they answered him? Mrs. Banks said.

—Yes, it is, Edward said. They have got me saying it.

Mr. Banks caught Harry and Allen in the hall and motioned them into the library. Edward followed without being bid.

—We'll be late for school, Harry said.

—You need not go today, Mr. Banks said. I shall write an excuse.

Harry dropped his books to the floor.

—We shall go to the park, Harry said. I'm sorry that I laughed at Allen during breakfast.

—That does not matter now, Mr. Banks said. But this is not a holiday; you shall remain at home or in the yard. We have nothing to celebrate.

—Only until three o'clock, Harry said. For we would be free then anyway.

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—Why are we not to go? Allen said. I've done my lessons for today.

—Be quiet, Harry whispered.

—You can sometimes learn more at home, Mr. Banks said. I am going to talk to you before I go downtown.

—Is there any way I can stop you? Edward said.

—I did not ask you to join us, Mr. Banks said. Do not attempt to interfere.

—No, Edward said. I am unable either to prevent evil or to accept it; I can only recognize it. That is my horror, but it is also beyond words so you will not understand.

—I *do* not understand, Mr. Banks said. Harry, you know what is meant by sin, do you not?

—Yes, Harry said. They have told us at school.

—And you, Allen? Mr. Banks said.

—I know, Allen said. It is stealing and lies. I knew we should be caught, Harry.

—What are you saying? Mr. Banks said.

Harry grabbed Allen's arm, and Allen turned to him.

—Cook has told him, Allen said. It wasn't worth it for a sandwich.

—Cook hasn't told him, Harry said. It is you who have told him.

—Perhaps he doesn't know yet, Allen said.

—Explain yourselves, Mr. Banks said.

—You have gone too far, Edward said. You must tell him now.

—It was the letter, Harry said. We took a sheet of paper from Cook to write it on.

—That is the stealing, Mr. Banks said. And the lies?

—I told Cook that Mother had said to give us a sandwich, Harry said. It was my lie.

—It is both of us, Allen said. He said that if we were caught it would be both of us.

—Allen is right, Mr. Banks said. You both stood to profit by the lie, and so you are both guilty. You shall apologize to Cook. But it is not *your* sins that I wished to talk to you about.

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—I told you, Allen, Harry said.

—Do not cricitize Allen, Mr. Banks said. It was right of him to confess.

—It was carelessness, not repentance, Edward said.

—There are more serious sins than either lying or stealing, although they are bad enough, Mr. Banks said. There is the sin of lust, in which one sacrifices decency for the satisfaction of bodily pleasures. It is that sin which your mother has committed.

Edward averted his head, and Harry shuffled his feet nervously. Allen did not move.

—These temptations will come to you, he continued. You must not give in to them. You must resist them for the sake of decency. Do not let the example of one weak woman guide you. What you have seen is a sinful and obscene act. Let the sight serve not to give pleasure but to remind you of the presence of evil in the world, evil which must be combatted. You have had before you an example of sin; remember it that you yourselves may not follow in the same path.

—It is this that must be the unforgivable sin, Edward said. The destruction of innocence.

Allen had begun to cry quietly.

—You are saying it wrong, Harry said. It is not the way you say it.

—You have seen for yourselves, Mr. Banks said.

—You say it wrong, Harry said. Tell him he is wrong, Edward. Allen believes him.

—I cannot explain it, Edward said. And if I could it would not help, for he cannot understand it and you already know.

—But Allen, Harry said. Allen believes him.

—Only he can change that belief, Edward said.

He turned to Mr. Banks.

—Allen is ten, Edward said. Think of what you do; there will be time later for morality. Tell him at least that it is not always bad, that it is sometimes permissible.

—He could not differentiate, Mr. Banks said. I shall tell him that when he is older.

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—It will be too late, Edward said.

—It is better that he learn this side now, Mr. Banks said. It will help him against temptation. And he is still impressionable. A lesson learned now will stay with him longer.

—It will stay with him forever, Edward said.

—That is my intention, Mr. Banks said.

. .

—Let's go into the yard, Harry said.

—All right, Allen said.

—You've been quiet all day, Harry said.

—I'm afraid, Allen said. I don't know why, but I'm afraid.

—There's nothing to be afraid of, Harry said. I'll take care of you.

—I'm not afraid of the yard, Allen said. It's something else.

—Don't mind what Father said, Harry said. He was only joking. He was only trying to scare us.

—That's not true, Allen said. You shouldn't tell lies.

Harry turned startled, dropping from his hands the stones he had been gathering.

—I'm not, Harry said. It is he who tells lies. What he said was wrong. You know it wasn't the way he said it.

—It was that way, Allen said. At least I'm not sure.

—Don't think about it, Harry said. Let's go to the park.

—We can't go, Allen said.

—Do you mean because it isn't three yet? Harry said. We have only five minutes to wait.

—We are not to go at all, Allen said. He said we have nothing to celebrate.

—I told him we were going after three, Harry said.

—He didn't say we might, Allen said. We shouldn't disobey.

—Is that what you're afraid of? Harry said. Are you afraid to disobey?

—I don't know, Allen said. That's part of it. I just know that I'm afraid.

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—Let's go bother Cook, Harry said. We've left her alone all day.

—I don't want to, Allen said.

—What do you want to do, then? Harry said.

—He said we should apologize, Allen said. Let's tell Cook that we are sorry.

—No, Harry said. That will mean no more sandwiches. I'll buy her some more paper, and not let her know about it.

—I am going to tell her that I'm sorry, Allen said. Perhaps then I will not be afraid.

—This is your first experience with obedience, Harry said. I hope it turns out badly so it will not become a habit.

—Are you coming? Allen said.

—I'll do it first, Harry said, since I'm the one that told the lie. You wait here.

—I'll go with you, Allen said. We're both guilty.

—No, Harry said. I'll apologize first, since it was mostly me, and then you can tell her.

—Don't be too long, Allen said.

—I won't, Harry said.

—Hello, Cook, Harry said.

—You have had a holiday, I see, Cook said. What was the occasion?

—We had to learn something at home, Harry said. I've come to tell you that I was bad yesterday.

—That's an everyday occurrence, not an event, Cook said.

—Mother didn't say that we might have the sandwiches, Harry said.

—It does not matter; you cleaned your plate, Cook said.

—I thought *you* might want the sandwiches, Harry said.

—Why should I? Cook said.

—Because you are big and fat, Harry said.

—Get out of here, now, Cook said. I'm going to tell your mother about that. That's no way to talk to me.

—I apologize, Harry said. I didn't know that you didn't like being fat. Is it because it's too much to carry around?

—I do like it, Cook said. It shows that I have a pleasant disposition. But you're going to be paddled tonight.

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—You're mad because we took your sandwiches, Harry said. You're afraid that you will grow thin and waste away. I apologize for taking your sandwiches.

—They are not my sandwiches, Cook said. If you don't leave I'll paddle you myself.

—I'll make you a sandwich, Cook, Harry said. If you will reach down the peanut butter.

—I don't want a sandwich, Cook said. I want to hear no more from you.

—Why don't you want the sandwich? Harry said. Are you afraid that you will get too fat? If you give me the sandwich I'll eat it for you.

—That's all, Cook said. Now leave or I'll use this frying pan for a paddle.

—I apologize for making you mad, Harry said. I am sorry to ruin your disposition and make you thin.

—No more apologies, Cook said. Leave.

Harry kicked her in the calf.

—That's to make you thin, he said.

Cook picked up the frying pan but Harry was already out the door.

—Cook is waiting for you, Harry said.

Allen entered the door to find Cook towering above him.

—I have come to apologize, Allen said.

The cook turned him around and whacked him with the pan.

—That is for being a villain, she said.

Allen ran out the door which Harry was holding open.

—You hit too hard, Harry said. You are a tub of guts.

He ran to follow Allen.

—You see, Harry said. That's what happens when you listen to father.

Allen nodded through his tears.

—Let's go to the park, Harry said.

They started off down the street with Harry's arm around Allen.

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GENESIS

I

Against the burly air I strode,
Where the tight ocean heaves its load,
Crying the miracles of God.

And first I brought the sea to bear
Upon the dead weight of the land;
And the waves flourished at my prayer,
The rivers spawned their sand.

And where the streams were salt and full
The tough pig-headed salmon strove,
Curbing the ebb and the tide's pull,
To reach the steady hills above.

II

The second day I stood and saw
The osprey plunge with triggered claw,
Feathering blood along the shore,
To lay the living sinew bare.

And the third day I cried: "Beware
The soft-voiced owl, the ferret's smile,
The hawk's deliberate stoop in air,
Cold eyes, and bodies hooped in steel,
Forever bent upon the kill."

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III

And I renounced, on the fourth day,
This fierce and unregenerate clay,

Building as a huge myth for man
The watery Leviathan,

And made the glove-winged albatross
Scour the ashes of the sea
Where Capricorn and Zero cross,
A brooding immortality—
Such as the charmèd phoenix has
In the unwithering tree.

IV

The phoenix burns as cold as frost;
And, like a legendary ghost,
The phantom-bird goes wild and lost,
Upon a pointless ocean tossed.

So, the fifth day, I turned again
To flesh and blood and the blood's pain.

V

On the sixth day, as I rode
In haste about the works of God,
With spurs I plucked the horse's blood.

By blood we live, the hot, the cold,
To ravage and redeem the world:
There is no bloodless myth will hold.

And by Christ's blood are men made free
Though in close shrouds their bodies lie
Under the rough pelt of the sea;

Though Earth has rolled beneath her weight
The bones that cannot bear the light.

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(de Sud)

fatal lieutenant Wiczieweky)? Je sais bien
que l'homme réduit à lui-même ne peut tendre qu'au
mal; il n'empêche qu'il y a quelque chose
dans Naaman qui attire la grâce comme
la foudre... quelle chose? Je serais tenté de
répondre: une rupture, un brisement de
cœur. Il est écrit dans le psaume 50
"Le sacrifice selon Dieu, c'est un esprit brisé: le
cœur contrit et brisé, ô Dieu, vous ne le mépriserez
jamais...." Vous répondrez que ce brisement est
déjà un effet de la grâce, une miséricorde toute
gratuite. Mais ne doit-on pas penser que Dieu sait
de toute éternité (au sein de son présent éternel),
que telle grâce sera accueillie? Rien n'est ni vain que ces sortes de débats...
Disons simplement qu'au départ (peut-être) une certaine
disposition intérieure dépend de nous
à l'égard de l'
amour, qui est le vrai Nom de Dieu...

— *An extract from* Bloc-Notes, *a recent series of articles on contemporary subjects, in this case a discussion of Julien Green's* Sud. *François Mauriac's distinguished works include* Thérèse Desqueyroux, Le nœud de vipères, Genetrix, Le sagouin, and Du côté de chez Proust. *He is a member of the French Academy and this year's Nobel Prize winner.*

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THE ART OF FICTION II

FRANÇOIS MAURIAC

Every novelist ought to invent his own technique, that is the fact of the matter. Every novel worthy of the name is like another planet, whether large or small, which has its own laws just as it has its own flora and fauna. Thus Faulkner's technique is certainly the best one with which to paint Faulkner's world, and Kafka's nightmare has produced its own myths that make it communicable. Benjamin Constant, Stendhal, Eugène Fromentin, Jacques Rivière, Radiguet, all used different techniques, took different liberties, and set themselves different tasks. The work of art itself, whether its title is Adolphe, Lucien Leuwen, Dominique, Le Diable au corps *or* A la recherche du Temps perdu, *is the solution to the problem of technique.*

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With these words François Mauriac, discussing the novel in *La Table Ronde* of August, 1949, described his own position. In March of this year he was interviewed on the same subject for *The Paris Review* by Jean le Marchand, Secrétaire Générale of *La Table Ronde*. M. le Marchand began by asking him about his earlier statement.

MAURIAC

My opinion hasn't changed. I believe that my younger fellow-novelists are greatly preoccupied with technique. They seem to think a good novel ought to follow certain rules imposed from outside. In fact, however, this preoccupation hampers them and embarrasses them in their creation. The great novelist doesn't depend on anyone except himself. Proust resembled none of his predecessors and he did not have, he could not have, any successors. The great novelist breaks his mould; he alone can use it. Balzac created the "Balzacian" novel; its style was only suitable for Balzac himself.

There's a close tie between a novelist's originality in general and the personal quality of his style. A borrowed style is a bad style. American novelists from Faulkner to Hemingway invented a style to express what they wanted to say—and it is a style that can't be passed on to their followers.

INTERVIEWER

You've said that every novelist should invent his style for himself—how would you describe your own?

MAURIAC

In all the time I've been writing novels I've very rarely indeed asked myself about the technique I was using. When I begin to write I don't stop and wonder if I am interfering too directly in the story, or if I know too much about my characters, or whether or not I ought to judge them. I write with complete *naiveté*, spontaneously. I've never had any preconceived notion of what I could or could not do.

If today I sometimes ask myself these questions it's because they are asked of me... because they are asked all around me.

Really there is no problem of this type whose solution is

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not found in the completed work, whether good or bad. The preoccupation with these questions is a stumbling block for the French novel. The crisis in French novel-writing that people talk about so much will be solved as soon as our young writers succeed in getting rid of the naive idea that Joyce, Kafka and Faulkner hold the Law Tables of fiction technique. I'm convinced that a man with the real novelist's temperament would transcend these taboos, these imaginary rules.

INTERVIEWER

All the same, haven't you ever deliberately made use of definite techniques in novel-writing?

MAURIAC

A novelist spontaneously works out the techniques that fit his own nature. Thus in *Thérèse Desqueyroux* I used some devices that came from the silent films: lack of preparation, the sudden opening, flashbacks. They were methods that were new and surprising at that time. I simply resorted to the techniques that my instinct suggested to me. My novel *Destins* was likewise composed with an eye to film techniques.

INTERVIEWER

When you begin to write, are all the important points of the plot already established?

MAURIAC

That depends on the novel. In general they aren't. There's a point of departure, and there are some characters. It often happens that the first characters don't go any further, and on the other hand, vaguer, more inconsistent characters show new possibilities as the story goes on and assume a place we hadn't foreseen. To take an example from one of my plays, *Asmodie*, I had no idea at the outset how M. Coutûre was going to develop, and how important he was going to become in the play.

INTERVIEWER

In writing your novels, has any one problem given you particular trouble?

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MAURIAC

Not yet. Today, however, I cannot remain unaware of the comments made on my work from the standpoint of technique. That's why the novel I just finished won't be published this year. I want to look over it again in that light.

INTERVIEWER

Have you ever described a situation of which you had no personal experience?

MAURIAC

That goes without saying... for example, I've never poisoned anyone! Certainly a novelist more or less comprehends all his characters; but I have also described situations of which I had no direct experience.

INTERVIEWER

How distant in time do you have to be before you can describe your own experiences, or things you have seen?

MAURIAC

One cannot be a true novelist before one has attained a certain age, and that is why a young author has almost no chance of writing successfully about any other period of his life than his childhood or adolescence. A certain distance in time is absolutely necessary for a novelist, unless he is writing a journal.

All my novels take place in the period contemporary with my adolescence and my youth. They are all a "remembrance of things past." But if Proust's case helped me to understand my own, it was without any conscious imitation on my part.

INTERVIEWER

Do you make notes for future use? When you see something of interest in the course of life do you think, "That will be something I can use?"

MAURIAC

Never; for the reason I have just given. I don't observe

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and I don't describe, I rediscover. I rediscover the narrow Jansenist world of my devout, unhappy and introverted childhood. It is as though when I was twenty a door inside of me had closed for ever on that which was going to become the material of my work.

INTERVIEWER

To what extent is your writing dominated by sense-perceptions—hearing, sound and sight?

MAURIAC

Very largely... the critics have all commented on the importance of the sense of smell in my novels. Before beginning a novel I recreate inside myself its places, its *milieu*, its colors and smells. I revive within myself the atmosphere of my childhood and my youth.—I *am* my characters and their world.

INTERVIEWER

Do you write every day, or only when you feel inspired?

MAURIAC

I write whenever it suits me. During a creative period I write every day... a novel ought not to be interrupted. When I cease to be carried along, when I no longer feel as though I were taking down dictation, I stop.

INTERVIEWER

Have you ever tried to write a novel entirely different from those you have written?

MAURIAC

Sometimes I've thought of writing a detective story, but I've never done it.

INTERVIEWER

How do you hit on the names of your characters?

MAURIAC

I have been unwise enough to use names that are very well known in my part of the country, around Bordeaux. So far,

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I have been able to avoid the great embarrassments that this system could have caused me.

INTERVIEWER

To what extent are your characters based on real people?

MAURIAC

There's almost always a real person in the beginning, but then he changes so that sometimes he no longer bears the slightest resemblance to the original. In general it is only the secondary characters who are taken directly from life.

INTERVIEWER

Have you a special system for changing a real person into an imaginary one?

MAURIAC

There is no system... it is simply the art of the novel. What takes place is a sort of crystallization around the person. It is quite indescribable. For a true novelist this transformation is a part of one's inner life. If I used some trick of prefabrication the result would not be a living character.

INTERVIEWER

Do you describe yourself in any of your characters?

MAURIAC

To some degree in all of them. I particularly described myself in *L'enfant chargé de chaines* and in *La robe Pretexte.* Ives Frontenac in *Le Mystère Frontenac* is both me and not me: there are strong resemblances, very strong, but at the same time a considerable deformation.

INTERVIEWER

How real to you are your characters after the novel is finished?

MAURIAC

That depends. I think about them when people ask me about them, but otherwise I don't return to them. I wrote a

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sequel to *Thérèse Desqueyroux* because I was induced to do so from outside. Then I decided myself to write *La fin de la nuit*, which of all my books is the one I wrote the most voluntarily.

INTERVIEWER

From the standpoint of technique, what writers influenced you most?

MAURIAC

I can't tell. As far as technique goes I have been influenced by nobody, or again by all the authors I have read. One is always the product of a culture. We are sometimes influenced by humble writers whom we have forgotten... perhaps I was influenced only by those books I was steeped in for so long, the books I read in childhood. I don't think I have been influenced by any other novelist. I am a novelist of atmosphere, and poets have been very important for me: Racine, Baudelaire, Rimbaud, Maurice de Guerin and François Jammes, for example.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think a novelist should "renew himself?"

MAURIAC

I feel that a writer's first duty is to be himself, to accept his limitations. The effort of self-expression should affect the manner of expression.

I have never begun a novel without hoping that it would be the one that would make it unnecessary for me to write another. I have had to start again from scratch with each one. What had gone before didn't count... I was not adding to a fresco. Like a man who has decided to start his life over again, I have told myself that I had so far accomplished nothing: for I have always believed that my *chef d'œuvre* would be the novel I was working on at the time.

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Bernard Buffet

Before Bernard Buffet one might possibly have considered drawing an insufficient art form, wanting paint to give it true value. The greatest painter of a generation had also to be its greatest draftsman. Bernard Buffet uses pen or pencil as a brush. He doesn't draw in the usual sense of the word: he paints with skillful gradations which range from lightest gray to darkest black. At twenty-four he has already acquired a thorough knowledge of his craft.

In the past he filled canvas and paper with the pain of passion; today he may be included among the greatest French landscape artists with his drawings of the Poitevin marshes and of the Charentes. We like to find that breaking with present trends Bernard Buffet has gazed upon streams and rivers dotted with pointed boats, bordered with poplars, and has expressed them with unusual emotion. We like those village streets framed by telegraph wires, becoming part of masterful compositions—deserted streets, abandoned ports—such is Buffet's universe. Carrying on with old tradition, he works in the villages he loves and lives in them.

We are familiar with his shabby rooms, iron beds, lamp shade frames; henceforth Bernard Buffet is not just a recorder of kitchen utensils but also of French landscapes.

—Pierre Bergé.

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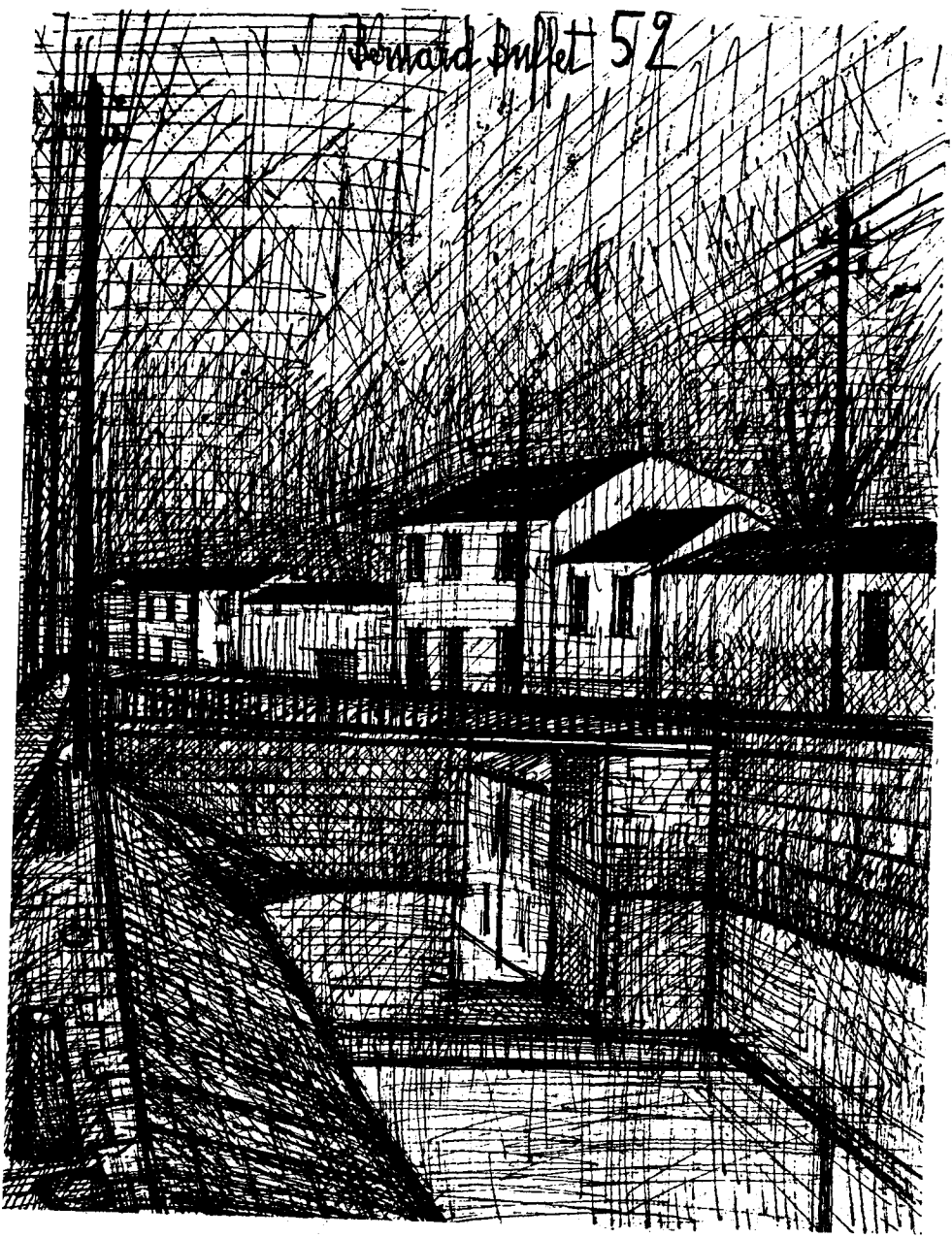

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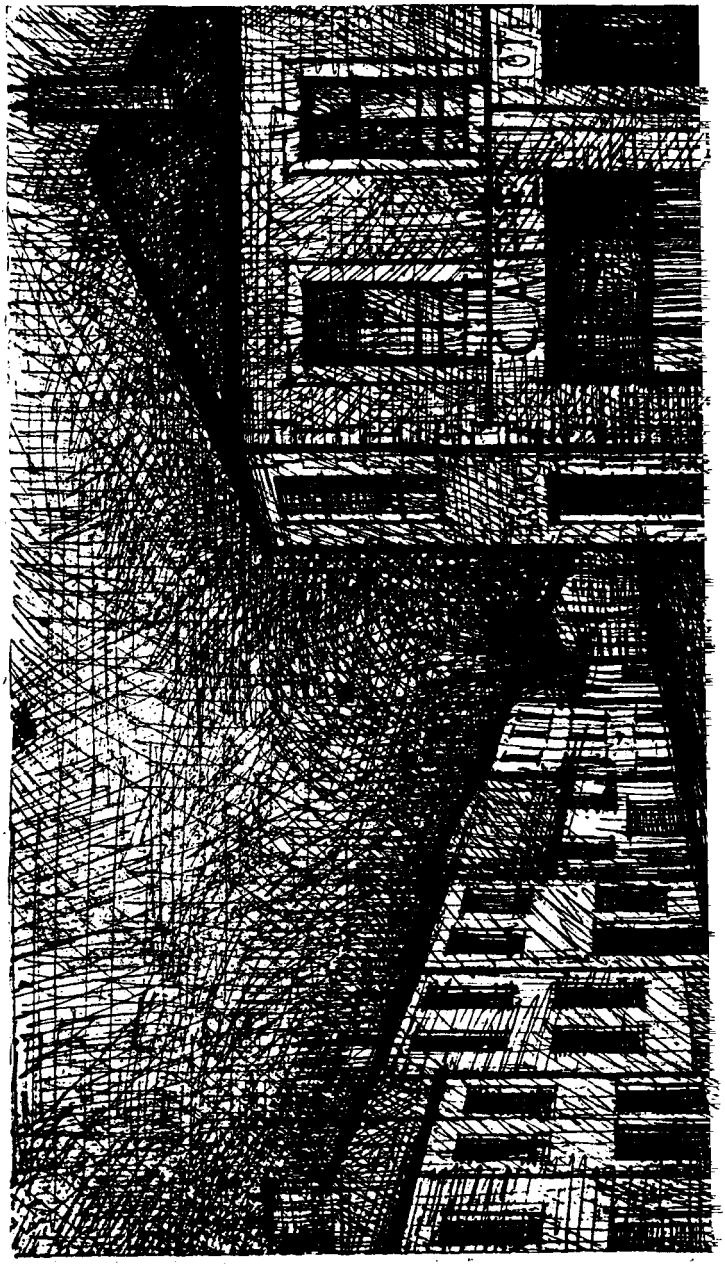

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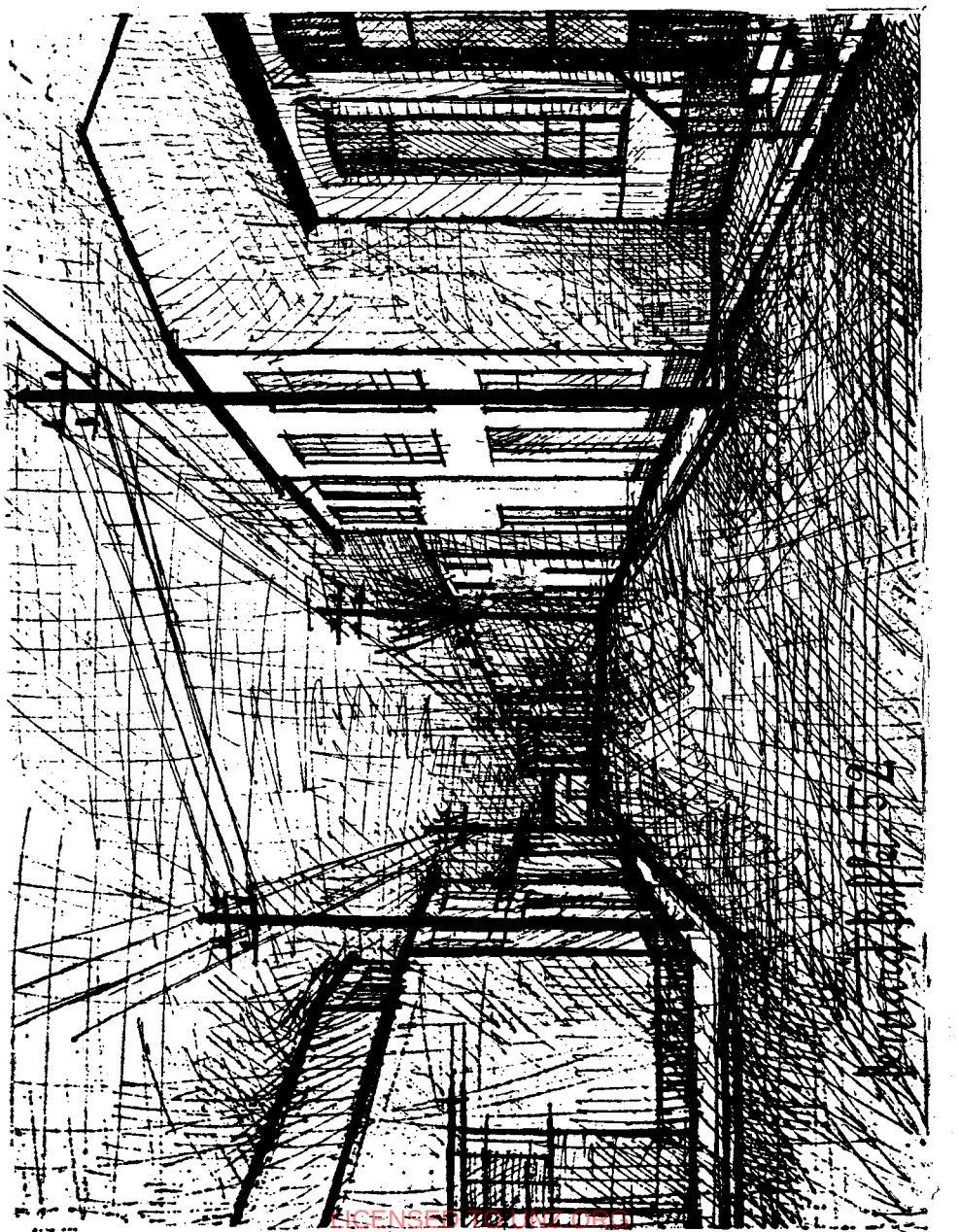

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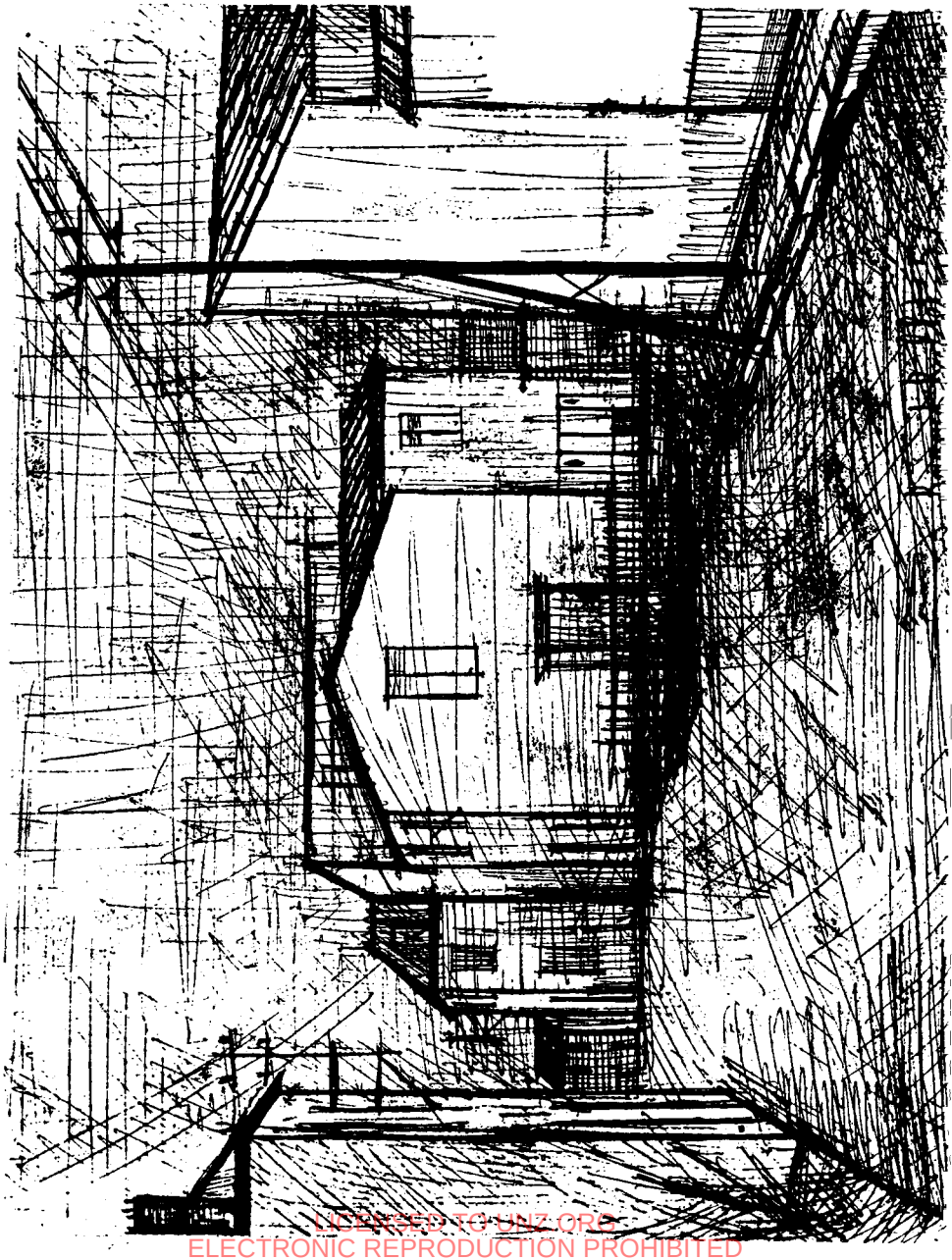

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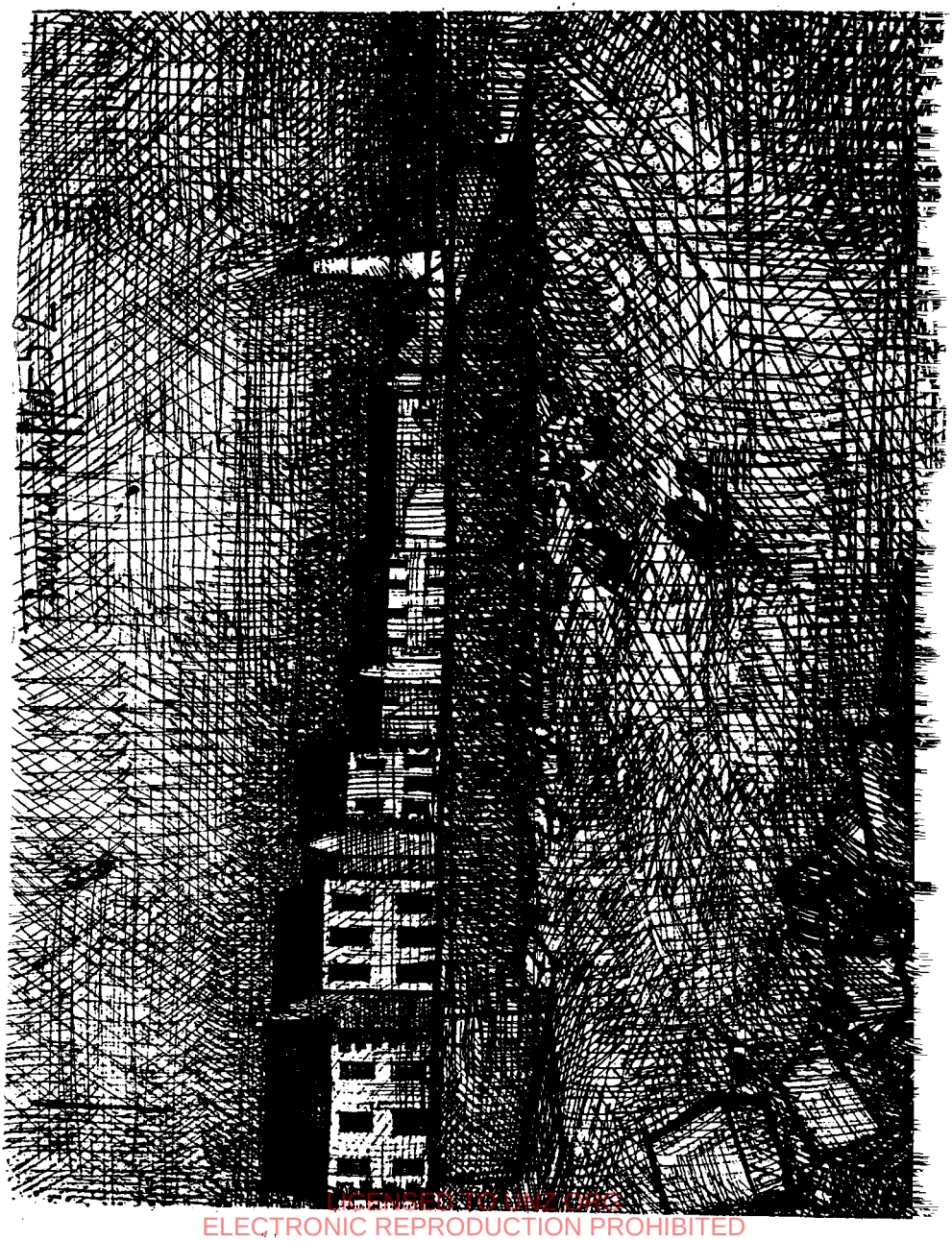

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CREATORS

Mind-potent men in their mastery,
Flowers and floaters,
Prey and pray, pretenders to the real,
Darers and doaters,
Whose eyes escape the mental minimum.

Deft-darters, self-torturers, sea-eekers,
Defamers and claimers,
Who find fire worthy to steal,
Universal firemen,
Groan as they give, as they get.

Grand and lambent, men in man's mischief,
Carers, creators,
Dream of the bird, the beast, and the woman,
Lovers and laughers,
Who, brimful, broach the big.

And mind-potent men in their mystery,
Fleeers and forcers,
Prink on the wind-lift as they feel,
Spirit-sensers,
The rich, rugged risible world.

Tall spirit is a draft of the drunken,
Lightsome, lissom,
Spirit is the flesh spirit-fashioned,
Fleshly-fresh,
Heavenly in spite of itself, then.

On memory lean, it is teeming,
Furor-finder,
Where the new dazzles upon the old,
Father-mother,
Sonship renews earth a thousandfold.

—RICHARD EBERHART

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BERNARD FRANK
Translated by PATRICIA SOUTHGATE

THE LOW COUNTRIES

OF late I had gotten less and less talkative and would sit for hours on a park bench, staring. But afterwards, when asked what I had seen, I didn't know. They took me to the mountains, all in vain, and after a series of disheartening proposals packed me off to the Low Countries.

At first I rather liked the restfulness of it. No longer disturbed about myself, I was quite content to wander about like an early case of dementia praecox. (This description, by the way, has stuck to me as closely as my Christian name). I smelled the tulips willingly enough, yet apparently wanted roses brought, blood-red roses which were, of course, denied me. I staggered out across their gray fields, black cape flung over my shoulders, and the natives, with their healthy respect for idiots, said hello to me. The children, too, were kind, edging up and asking me to cut them walking-sticks or make a doll for them. But alas, they did not realize that I was an idiot utterly lacking in talent, whose hands were renowned for their clumsiness.

The sky in these countries seems to scrape the earth, but I couldn't draw any conclusions about it. Then, as though I'd asked a question, as though I'd seemed worried about it, I was told the sky was part of my treatment, and that I must keep myself well bundled up. I said all right, and it occurred to me for no particular reason that I loved cigarettes, or rather, to watch the things around me consuming themselves. So from time to time I would go and roll in the clay along the river, and they scolded me, but never unkindly: "Look how muddy you are, come and see yourself in the mirror." And

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when I answered, "But this country reminds me of my favorite planet, Mars," somebody murmured, "Good, good, his analogies are coming back to him."

When I was sick of walking, I would climb into a tub, one of those thousands of tubs which drift along the canals. But in the Low Countries the rushes are extremely stiff, and often they capsized my tub and threw me into the water. I would feel like the fair Ophelia, humming and weeping over my death just as in childhood I had lain in bed at night and wept at the prospect of my funeral.

But as I plunged further into the Low Countries and got to know them better, the awareness of being alive returned, and my calm deserted me. The sky was decidedly too close to the earth, and I didn't like that leaden look it had one bit. But out I went anyhow, crying to it, "Get off my back, you'll soon have me all bent over!" If I'd had a grain of sense I'd have gone indoors, but I persevered even though the air seemed to be getting thinner, repeating to myself: "Don't be afraid, it can't last this way forever and don't fall down either;

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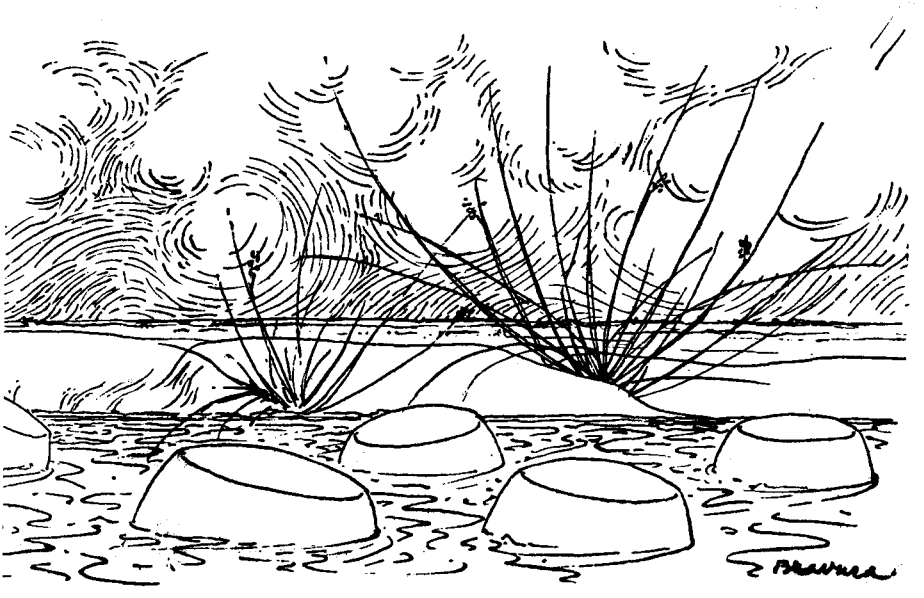
that's the main thing, don't fall down." And in these moments of dizziness when anybody else would have taken a swallow of alcohol I would mutter my first name and my last name over and over again to myself. Landscapes became long corridors and I lost all sense of their proportions. I would walk and walk, wanting sometimes to retrace my steps but afraid that this would lose me still more hopelessly. There were signposts and arrows, but they weren't enough to reassure me. The signs read, "The Sea," "The Sea," but I could never quite catch up with it.

In the course of these expeditions I retraced the tortuous paths of religion and childhood. For a long time I've tried to tell myself, "There are more pressing problems," or Jesus is a thing of the past." Still, I remember never daring to go to the storage-room alone for fear of seeing Jesus's face, lean and black-fringed like a crow, and of never being able to sleep again. At times, truly obsessed with fear, I would take to locking my bed-room door. I nailed to my wall a picture of the young Christ, stolen from a book, and kneeling before it,



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I swore an oath never to fear him again. At first I felt purified for five or six days at a stretch. Yet I was terrified that my mother and father, who had no religion, would catch me and lecture me for my stupid affectations. Then one day, since I was Jewish, my schoolmates (who could pray to their Lord Jesus without having to hide it) hurled snowballs at me full of ice and pebbles.

I swore revenge. This cruel Jesus had undergone a metamorphosis, assuming the appearance of the little boys in short pants and shirts who had bloodied up my face. He would be punished, I would whip him, I laughed ahead of time at the thought of his howls. I asked my father if it were true that I had crucified him. The whole business was nonsense, he answered. I saw that until now I had been much too kind to Jesus. This time I would not spare him, I would *really* crucify him, and he would richly deserve it. And since the little boys had sisters, I dressed the Virgin Mary in their dresses and berets, and then I pinched her.

These special masses of mine took place at night, and I got quite a kick out of them. My conscience was completely clear because, even if my parents were wrong, even if God did exist, he would certainly reward me for having attacked, whipped, and thoroughly punished his two competitors.

Doubtless I looked a little wan on the days when I had to go to church with my parents for a marriage or a baptism. Jesus and Mary, of course, were but little gods whose power seemed to me outrageously exaggerated. But nevertheless they might act up once they had me inside the church. The big God, the only God, the God of my ancestors, so busy and preoccupied, could easily forget me for an instant, leave me naked and defenseless with the two I had treated so cruelly. If by dint of some bribery or cajolery or entreaty my mother managed to lure me inside a church, I would hang back fearfully near the door, ready to flee the instant I spotted Jesus or Mary. I would come armed with a jack-knife in case some choir-boy had been tipped off and tried to block my escape. Then carefully I would scrutinize the windows from which I imagined that Jesus, like Tarzan, might appear at any mo-

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ment. He would hurtle through the stained glass without a scratch and, swooping down, wrench me from the pillar to which I clung. And under the eyes of a flock struck dumb with astonishment, he would whisk me off to the inner sanctums of the church. There would be cries from the lectern, from the pulpit, from the very steps of the chancel itself, and then my crushed body would appear upon the altar.

It was in that period that I gained my concept of Hell. One didn't actually suffer, it was simply that the unexpected was always taking place. If one leaned against a tree, it would fall down; if on a friend, he would steal away. Everyone was Playing the Game, or pretending to Play the Game, and then disappearing. The tension was constant. I might be talking with a man, let's call him Simon, about another man, say André, discussing André's treacheries, his crimes, and a strange uncontrollable desire would goad me, force me to ally myself with this dreadful André, to turn on Simon. But Simon, speaking quietly, would be way ahead of me, and it was I who was finally trapped. After fifteen minutes of this sort of hell one was really exhausted, yet one could never rest, for treachery was everywhere.

Now, whenever God comes back to me, when he tries to lick my hand with his huge fumbling tongue, I fend him off with a rap on the snout, saying, "Beat it, you old jackass." It's mere child's play, and it gets rid of him for a good long time.

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RICHARD WILBUR

STATUES

These children playing at statues fill
The gardens with their shrillness; in a planned
And planted grove they fling from the swinger's hand
Across the giddy grass and then hold still

In gargoyle attitudes,—as if
All definition were outrageous. Then
They melt in giggles and begin again.
Above their heads the maples with a stiff

Compliance entertain the air
In abrupt gusts, losing the look of trees
In rushed and cloudy metamorphoses,
Their shadows all a brilliant disrepair,

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A wash of dodging stars, through which
The children weave and then again undo
Their fickle zodiacs. It is a view
Lively as Ovid's chaos, and its rich

Uncertainty compels the crowd:
Two nuns regard it with habitual love,
Moving along a path as mountains move
Or seem to move when traversed by a cloud;

The soldier breaks his iron pace;
Linked lovers pause to gaze; and every role
Relents,—until the feet begin to stroll
Or stride again. But settled in disgrace

Upon his bench, one aging bum,
Brought by his long evasion and distress
Into an adamantine shapelessness,
Stares at the image of his kingdom come.

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IN THE HOUSE WHERE THEY WERE BORN

No, no, said Miss Etta, putting three loops and a scallop to centre front, no no no, said Miss Etta, crossing behind and slipping two, no no, don't tell me she didn't mean it. Don't try to tell me she didn't mean it, because I know she did, and she began the second row.

Of course, a person can always be mistaken, murmured Miss Grace.

Oh, no, said Miss Etta, putting three scallops and a loop to centre back, oh no oh no, said Miss Etta crossing in front and skipping two, no no, don't try to tell me it was a mistake when she said it to my face, and on they would go, the two old ladies, rocking and creaking and making their own music while the flies buzzed and the clock ticked and the weeds grew in the places no one could get at them.

No, no don't tell me she didn't say it...

Perhaps you were mistaken...

Don't tell me I'm mistaken...

Likely she didn't mean it...

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PATI HILL

Don't tell me she didn't mean it when I know her through and through...

Sometimes to distract her sister, to break up the rhythm of their conversation, Miss Grace would get up and start moving about the room tidying this and that, setting the snakeplant straight, laying the tea things out on the table. Biscuits for tea, she would say, warmed over, the last of the gooseberry jam, or if it were spring she might go to the window and raise it a little to look over the pansy bed. Such darlings they are this year, their little turned-up faces, just come and look, just have a glimpse of them.

Etta wouldn't come, of course, because the weight of herself was too immense a thing to be moved about lightly to please Grace. Not enough rain this season, she would say, mind the draft on your shoulders. No no she couldn't come to the window for such a thing as that, but it gave Grace the illusion of her immobile counterpart sharing her life to speak in this manner and so she never gave up saying things like come and

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look, and you should have been there, and when we go up to the attic again—their little game—and wherever Grace went she carried a part of Etta. More exactly it was as if she carried a basket in which she put such things as might be of use or interest to her, bringing them home to empty out with the things from the market, while Etta sat at home in her wicker chair, in the cool of the parlor by the window. Or sometimes on the porch, but always in her wicker chair, crocheting, crocheting forever at her fancy work, which was so delicate that at times she had to take her big magnifying glass that she kept in the folds of her lap to know where she was at all in the intricate pattern she was making, hooking, looping, hooking the livelong day. A pillow-cover for Jeanie, a tidy for Alice, a runner for the minister's wife, into each of which she wove every imagined spite and long-forgotten misunderstanding and complicated disagreement that came to her mind, talking aloud at intervals to herself so that long before the tidy had reached the proportions of a recognizable shape, Grace knew for whom it was destined and, as if sensing the infinite spite these things were made with, as often as not forgot to give them to their victims, laying them starched and tissue-papered in the bottom of the chest in the front hall where they would stay until enough months had gone by and it was summer and she could no longer remember whom they were intended for. And to ask would be not so much to admit her negligence as to cause Etta pain, so she would have to take them to the Charity Bazaar where as likely as not Ruth bought the antimacassar destined for Georgina and gave it to Annie for her daughter-in-law's wedding anniversary. In this way Mary Howard, living in barracks with her engineer husband, was the final recipient of Etta's scorn and disapproval of her first of kin, and Mary Howard receiving it along with the plastic cups she wanted and the baby bottle heater, would put it for a second on her head and drawl at her husband, well*ll* mistah, you're so snippy about my hats how d'ya like this one for a change? And he, tired as he was from his training course, and running the second-hand washing machine in the evenings, would see for a second the Mary Howard of the so short and so long ago,

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but being tired he would forget to put the smile on his face which meant that he saw or even appreciated the little extra minute of energy it took to make the joke, and Mary Howard would fling it into a corner stamping her foot and yelling, well all right then mistah sourface always with your nose in a book I hope you get to be General Pershing and I hope I'm *dead*! and this would wake the baby, and the whole round so tenuously held in check would begin over again, penetrating the walls of the thin apartment and reacting chainwise through the barracks, so the little carefully patterned grudge or spite of Etta would have made itself purposeful after all, only so far away that one could believe it never happened.

Miss Grace was five years old when Miss Etta was born of a fine summer afternoon just before tea in the very room she occupied to this day, crying lustily and already possessed of a headful of hair the length of a finger tip.

When they told Miss Grace there was going to be a new baby in the family she did not think much of it because she already had four beautiful dolls and a nursemaid named Acey and a cup and a bowl and a silver spoon to dig with in the earth behind the house. She did not think much of it but as the time grew near and the talk grew more and the packages began to arrive she commenced to sing a song about her baby sister and what she was going to do when she had a baby sister and on and on, some of the words of which Acey remembered and told her many years later. She did not think she was singing this song about the sister but she was, and when it kept up her mother said to Acey, Acey you musn't let the child go on and on about that baby sister all the time, suppose it turns out a baby brother, she'll be disappointed, so Acey began to say, when she began the song, come sing some about your baby brother, honey, sing your old Acey a little about your baby brother cause you don't know it ain't going to be a baby bro-

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ther you're getting; but when Acey said this, Grace would stiffen up thinner than ever and twist her mouth to one side and start to cry.

When Acey went on about the baby brother anyway Grace would get red in the face and start to yell so loud she would have to grab her in her arms and take her off into the pantry and get her a pacifier so as not to disturb the whole house. Acey never stopped talking about the brother though because she didn't want Miss Gracie to be disappointed, but it didn't do any good. Every time she tried to make her sing about a baby brother she would stiffen up and get red in the face and start to yell (they told her about it later) and they would have to do everything to get her calmed down again. After a while it got to be a joke around the house, and as the time got shorter and shorter Jess and Lemmy and Evvie rolled up their eyes and said, Lawdie if that baby don't turn out to be a girl there ain't goin' to be no livin' around this house for Miss Gracie, if'n it don't right turn out to be a girl we just as well GIVE UP.

The day the baby was supposed to come Acey was scared. All morning long she kept Miss Gracie out in the back, way away from the house, and every time she began her song or started asking anything Acey changed the subject. She went in the house and looked for everything she could find to keep Miss Gracie busy and after lunch when she took her up for her nap she tried once again to tell her how it might be different from what she thought and that time Miss Gracie let loose with a yell that like to split the house wide open and she kept on yelling until her Pa came in and grabbed her by the shoulders and stood her up in a corner and started shaking her.

Go on out Acey, he said to Acey, I've had enough of this, go on out of here, and he went on shaking Miss Grace and saying he had had enough and Acey ran out in the hall crying, Lawdy Lawdy Mr. John, and holding her hands over her ears because she couldn't bear to hear Miss Grace go on that way and just when she thought she couldn't bear it any longer, she looked up and saw Rachel on the stairs laughing fit to kill. Shut your mouth you crazy Rachel, Acey said, Mr. John like to kill Miss

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Gracie, but Rachel went on laughing and laughing saying, well it ain't no use to kill her, now she got herself a baby sister just like she want. Acey went up to Rachel and grabbed her and shook her and said you ain't jokin' me you crazy nigger, you ain't jokin' me, is you? and when she wasn't Acey went down on her knees and praised the Lawd and then she got up and went in the nursery and grabbed Miss Grace away from Mr. John and hugged her in her arms and said, come on honey, come on to your old Acey, you got a baby sister upstairs and ain't nothing going to hurt you now. Acey was crying and sobbing and shaking all over but Miss Gracie was calm as anything and dried her eyes as if nothing had happened, just as if they hadn't tortured her and miseried her and persecuted her all those weeks for nothing, and Mr. John never said a word. Never said a word, went off into the parlor and started reading his paper like he knew when he was beaten.

Miss Grace didn't remember any of that, didn't remember the crying and the waiting and the wishing, didn't even remember how her father got turned against her but she remembered the first time she saw the baby for the rest of her life. It was right after tea and she went upstairs with Acey, wearing her best dress, and came in the room and the blinds were down and the furniture was arranged in a way she did not know and her mother did not look like her mother, but in the corner of the room was a basket on wheels with a bride's veil over it and inside was the baby, not red like babies she had seen since nor screaming like babies she had seen before but lying there pink and sleeping like a live doll with hair an inch long all over her head. She marched right up to the basket and pushed away the veil and started to take it with her then and there. Nobody knew she was going to do that and she had the covers back and had the baby almost out when they caught her back and told her she couldn't have it now and Acey was afraid she was going to cry again but she smiled as pretty as you please (she never was what you would call a pretty child but she had a pretty smile) and covered her back up and went away with Acey, pleased as anything.

And she went right on being pleased. After that everything

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was baby, baby, baby. Baby was the first thing she thought when she went to bed. Twice a day she was allowed to see the baby and everytime she would go up to see her she would say to Acey, can I have her now Acey, can I have her today? and every day Acey was obliged to say, not yet honey, it ain't big enough yet, but Miss Grace was never impatient. She was wanting it all the time, you could see how she was wanting all the time to take it away but she never said anything.

Everything the baby did delighted Grace. Every time she waved her hands or curled her toes or kicked the covers Grace would say, look at her Acey, look at her what she's doing! When she spit up or blew bubbles or screwed her face into an old orange, Gracie laughed and said, look at her Acey look-a-there at my baby what she's doing now. When at last the baby could go out of doors in its carriage Miss Gracie walked along beside or played on the grass nearby coming up ever so often to look inside to see if everything was all right. Acey had seen a lot of babies take to each other in her life but she never saw any take like that. Man, she said, laughing, she sure do love that baby, she sure do love that baby sister of hers.

And it was a wonderful baby. A really marvellous baby.

From the first it hardly ever cried, just lay there in her carriage or her bed looking grave and dignified and calm the way a baby should look, not squirming around or trying to pull onto things or doing any of the things a baby usually did. Everything you did for her made her happy. She liked to be fed and changed and to have her little fur cap of a head brushed up into a curl. She liked to be stroked and petted and she was never so content as just sitting for hours at a time on Rachel's lap staring gravely around her. A real queen she was, that one, a real little queen of a baby.

Only very rarely something annoyed her and she would burst into a bellow of rage, screwing up her face and opening her mouth and yelling with every bit of force inside her until whatever it was that annoyed her or frightened her or hurt her was taken away and then she would be all right again—not like Miss Gracie had been, whimpering among the whole after-

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noon sometimes without anyone seeming to find the trouble, or trying not to cry, or crying on purpose. When Miss Etta cried you could be sure there was something she didn't like. (Later she learned to sulk and sometimes she could sulk for a day and a half as if she had a memory a mile long for what made her mad, but at first she was just black and white and nothing in between).

From the first she rarely smiled. She did not frown or seem to be mad or displeased but she just didn't smile. Little Gracie fell into the habit of doing everything she could to make the baby smile. Come on and make the baby smile. She would tickle her under the chin with a buttercup to see if she liked butter or make the dolly dance on the edge of the crib or make faces or go and get all her toys one by one and put them into the baby's bed. Sometimes when they were outdoors they would have to keep a sharp eye out to see that Miss Gracie didn't dump a whole bunch of things into the carriage that weren't good for the baby. Toads and stones and once she tried to put the cat on top of her. Acey caught her just in time before it sucked the baby's breath and smacked her hands properly but Rachel only laughed and said, never you mind about *that* baby, Acey, that baby knows how to look out for herself—she know what she like and what she don't like and she don't stand for nothing in between, and it was true.

Etta knew from the first what she liked and what she didn't like and soon as she was able to take a hold of anything she did not like and pitch it right back out of the carriage onto the grass. You see Acey, Grace would repeat, she knows what she likes and what she doesn't like and she would look admiringly at her wonderful sister who knew what she liked and what she didn't like from the first.

Almost the first word the baby learned to say was "bring." Later when she began to stand up on her fat little legs Acey and Rachel used to try to make her go after things herself so she would learn to walk. Don't go bringing everything to her, they would say to Grace, let her go and get it for herself, and Grace would sit on the lawn on her hands and watch while Acey and Rachel pushed the ball away or waved the flower or

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walked away themselves saying to the baby come on honey, come on over here and get it, and the baby would look at them gravely as if she did not know what they meant or did not care or didn't see even though a minute before she had had the thing she did not have now clutched in her fat little hand for dear life. If they kept on long enough she simply lost interest altogether or began to yell so hard they had to stop and give it to her, and so she went on long past the age when most babies were walking, still trotting along holding the hands of Rachel and Grace or being wheeled about in her outgrown carriage.

When's that baby going to learn to walk? Mr. John used to say when he took any notice of the baby. When's she going to start getting around by herself ? And he would put her on her feet and give her a bit of a push like to start a turtle but she would just sit back down again on her bottomside and look at him in a way that later turned into her sulky way. She don't want to, Grace would say, can't you see she don't want to, Papa? Don't say don't, her Papa would say, and it's high time she started to, but he would not pit his will against Etta's, he never again really pitted his will against his daughters.

About as soon as Miss Etta learned to say "bring" she learned to say "mine."

By the time she was three years old she had a better idea of "mine" than most grown people. Oh she wasn't like most babies that latch onto anything they see and say mine. Nosir, Miss Etta wasn't like that. She knew the difference between mine and not mine like you or me and when she said mine she meant mine and if she didn't she wanted to know the reason why, and it wasn't just any old thing that she said mine about. You might offer that baby a hundred things before she saw something she wanted for hers but when she saw it it was goodbye Jesus, you might as well give up and give it to her.

She used to start in her bedroom in the morning—my brush, she would say, my comb, Etta's little potpot, Etta's looking glass, and that's how it would go. Sometimes she would pick up a pin or a pocket handkerchief and say, with a question mark in her voice, Etta's pin? Etta's hankie? and if you

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said, no that ain't Etta's then she would put it down again good as gold. But sometimes again she got the idea to have something that wasn't hers and then came the trouble. Yes-sir then was when came the trouble like the time she got the idea to have the silver syrup jug in the downstairs buffet in the pantry. Just an ordinary silver syrup jug you might find anywhere but it was something special to Etta.

She started off as usual putting her baby fingers up and saying, Etta's, and nobody paid any attention and every time she passed she put up her fingers and said, Etta's, patient but firm, but after a while she started to be annoyed and when she passed she would pull away from Rachel and start trying to climb up to get at it like she was sick and tired of this game and wanted to have her rights. Well, it went on like that until it caused so much trouble that Etta's mother finally said, well all right Rachel, for it's going to cause so much trouble then let her take it, take it on upstairs and when she's tired of it bring it back down, and Rachel did, and for a while she waited for Etta to be tired of it so she could bring it back down, but she never got tired of it. It would lie in the toy closet for weeks at a time, Etta not paying any attention, but if ever Rachel tried to sneak it away and bring it back down there was trouble.

Miss Etta was five years old and Miss Grace was ten when Miss Etta walked into Miss Grace's room one day and picked up her china doll from the Chicago Exposition and started to walk away it. Happen Miss Grace just took the doll gently out of her arms and said no honey, you can't have that dolly but I'll give you another one to play with. She should have known more than to say that because nobody knew better than she did that you couldn't put a thing like that over on Etta, but she said it and took the doll back and hid it away in the closet. Etta started in on the doll like she had on the cream pitcher and a lot of other things. Every time she passed the closet she said, my doll in there, and every time she saw Grace she wanted to know where her doll was. After a while Acey saw Miss Gracie was weakening, saw she couldn't stand Miss Etta's sulking and she was weakening and she

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said, look here Miss Gracie don't you go and give that dolly to Miss Etta, she's got enough dolls, you just keep that dolly for yourself and she'll forget about it. Of course that wasn't true though and she didn't forget about it and it went on until one day Miss Gracie went into the closet and took the doll out.

What you doin', Miss Gracie? said Acey, you're not going to give that dolly to Miss Etta are you, honey? and Miss Grace didn't say anything. Just began undressing the doll and taking measurements and getting pieces of cloth and scissors and pretty soon she had made a whole new wardrobe for the doll—hats and shoes and handbags and everything a doll could need—and when she had finished she got a big box and put the doll in with tissue paper and the wardrobe laid at its feet and dressed the box up in more paper and ribbon and took it down to dinner and put it by Miss Etta's place.

When Miss Etta saw the box, that look of content came over her like it always came over her when anybody did something for her and what made it such a pleasure to do anything for her when she was little, and she started undoing the ribbons very carefully not letting anyone help her and everyone sat back waiting for her to let out a cry of joy. But they were going to be surprised because when she saw what was inside and the wonderful clothes Miss Grace had made and how it was all laid out there beautiful and ready for her, she took the doll and the box and the clothes and walked to the door and threw them out.

Why Etta, cried her mother, you naughty girl aren't you ashamed of yourself? aren't you downright ashamed of yourself behaving like that? and if it hadn't been that they had company coming and wanted to get the children off to bed quietly she would have turned her up and spanked her then and there but Miss Grace didn't say a word, didn't even go out and bring the doll back in.

Sometimes sitting with the two of them on the front lawn of an afternoon Rachel would say, looking down on the shining

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curls of her sturdy little Etta, Heaven help Miss Gracie when Miss Etta grow up, Acey, Heaven help her cause she ain't goin' to be able to help herself none and Acey would fold her arms over her bosom and say, never you mind about Miss Gracie, honey, Miss Gracie goin' to do all right for herself, like Rachel used to say when it was Miss Etta in the carriage and Miss Gracie running around, never you mind but even Acey was surprised when Miss Gracie turned out to be one of the four or five most popular girls in Laurel. Of course there weren't a lot of girls the year Miss Grace made her bow but all the same she did all right for herself, nobody knew why because she never got to be any prettier than she was when she was a little girl—that is to say her nose didn't get any shorter and her eyes didn't get any bigger nor her hair any thicker—but she was a lively girl and she knew how to sing the latest songs and she waltzed like no one in those parts could waltz, and for a while it looked like Miss Grace was going to have the pick of Laurel to choose from and then some (what I tell you, said Acey to Rachel, my girl doin' all right for herself now ain't she? doin' all right).

But then something always happened.

First it was Mr. Dick and he fell into a stream and drowned himself, and then it was Mr. Galloway and he eloped out of a blue sky with a girl from Vicksburg, and then it was that young man down from Warrenton and he got himself mixed up in some kind of scrape before ever he got to the point of speaking (and a good thing, too, said Gracie, a fine how-do-you-do it would have been if he'd spoken and then got himself mixed up that way I can tell you)—it was always something.

She was still going strong though up until Etta made her bow. Then everything started going wrong. For both of them. Because after all that building up and waiting and expecting Etta was never able to cut any ice in Laurel or anywhere else.

And no wonder, said Acey, she's spoiled that one, she's just plain spoiled, Rachel, and you know it. It ain't that, said Rachel, she ain't really spoiled, it's just something else. But whatever it was, Miss Etta was no good from the start. Only

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the curious thing was, she didn't seem to notice it. She didn't seem to notice at the dances where she was left sitting alone on her little gold chair or at tennis where she was left sitting alone on a bench or in the evenings when the girls got together and talked and she was left alone by herself in a corner with nothing to say. She just went on sitting as calmly as could be as if she were doing a cross-stitch pattern that took all her time, and paid no attention to anyone. No matter who it was nor where it was nor what it was, she did not seem to be paying the least attention, just sitting knitting or napping or doing nothing as pretty as you please, a muffet on a tuffet, calm as roast never seeming to have heard a word, much less to have cared. Grace went on stuffing her into this and that (she was already beginning to be a bit plump) and taking her here and there and introducing her to her friends. She was polite and said every thing she should and did every thing she should but she just did not get any farther and the summer after that Miss Grace went crazy.

Stark raving crazy, and she that had been such a natural girl, such a lively and natural girl became twice as lively and twice as natural as life and began running after every Tom, Dick and Harry in town.

Poor Grace, they said after all she can't help it, she's twenty-three years old and if she's ever going to get herself a man she'd better get him now. But whenever she would get a man, even seem to have aroused the least interest in a man she would begin to act up and behave in such a way as to leave him completely dumbfounded, for as soon as he would start coming to the house she would begin having the most awful sick headaches and have to take to her bed, or she remembered an engagement she had forgotten until the very minute of his arrival or suddenly think of an errand she must do at once and rush off leaving him to sit on the verandah with her sister, Etta, sitting on the verandah nodding and rocking and talking with her sister Etta who heaven knows everyone knew was dull as a cup of tea on a hot day in June and after a few times of this the young man would give up and never come again.

Oh there were kinder people who said, it's marvellous the

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way that poor girl does everything she can to make her sister popular—she's so devoted to that sister of hers—and some of them even went so far as to tell her they knew what she was doing and to ask her what she was going to do about it, but Grace always threw her hands in the air and said, Lord, if I didn't have anything better to do with my time than *that*! and laughed the new hysterical laugh she was beginning to have, and started talking about boys or parties or something else and behaving altogether disgracefully. So disgracefully that forty years later, people not remembering how she had behaved so disgracefully but only remembering that she had behaved somehow and taking the kindest view of it that one could take after forty years, still said, well, Grace may seem like a natural-born spinster now, all right, but there were the days when every man in town was after her, I can tell you *that*, even though they didn't personally remember. And all the time Etta went on knitting and sewing and listening and thinking and seeing Charlie Mayhew who ran the bookstore, every other Wednesday for two hours in the afternoon.

Naturally nobody thought anything of this attachment. After all they never expected her to marry Charlie Mayhew, no not even Etta, and probably nothing would ever have come of it anyway if Grace had not started noticing and asking and noticing and asking Etta about Charlie. No, nobody knew or cared nor ever would have known perhaps or cared if Grace hadn't dropped everything else she was doing and got Charlie Mayhew wrapped up in a box and handed him to Etta, handed him to Etta in a big box with tissue paper.

The year after that Gracie calmed down and Etta who was already calm calmed down still further and they began the life they continued to lead for the rest of their lives in the house where they were born.

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SIX DRAWINGS FOR FAULKNER'S "THESE THIRTEEN"

ESPINOUZE, a painter of Catalan origin, was born at Perpignan and had his first exhibition in 1930, at Montpelier. He was then fifteen years old. In the late Thirties he was identified with the Surrealist Group and exhibited with them in both London and Paris. With Max Ernst, Magritte, Joan Miro and others, Espinouze illustrated such Surrealist texts as *Le Chant de Maldoror* and André Breton's *Cahier de la Rêve*. In 1939 he became exasperated with the movement and struck out in pursuit of "les choses simples" (retaining, however, his strong sense of mystery and the spiritual, of the morphology of living forms: his work is characterized by a sombre, meditative quality quite unlike anything in Courbet, Cezanne, and Soutine, the painters he feels have influenced him most). Presently he is developing a series of landscapes into which the animals and human creatures are integrated, not intellectually as in literature, but through texture and form. Espinouze is a painter's painter whose work has been admired by Picasso, Dufy, and many others.

Like WILLIAM FAULKNER, from whose volume of short stories these impressions are taken (*Victory*, *Ad Astra*, *A Rose for Emily*, *Red Leaves*, *Crevasse*), Espinouze is drawn by the primordial elements in man and nature, and his art seeks out the "emblematic" aspect of human behavior. —P. M.

BY ESPINOUZE

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VICTOIRE

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AD ASTRA

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UNE ROSE POUR EMILIE

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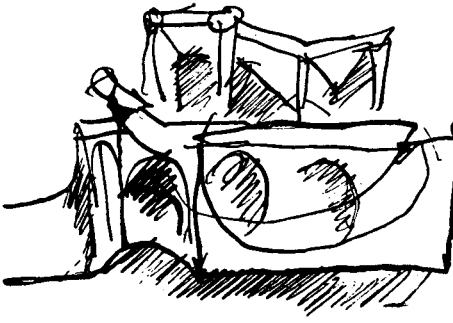
FEUILLES ROUGES



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CREVASSE

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CHORAL STANZA

For peace and peace and peace the prayers ascend
From tongues in darkness sung to tongues in light
In death
In turbulence of death
The bodies broken in the Asian streets
To float in peace
I've seen the bodies broken in the Asian streets
The blood comes down like rain
And bones like hail
Dear God, we have abundant death.

—Robert Bly

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SIMONE WEIL
Translated by JOHN P. C. TRAIN

A WAR OF RELIGION ?

MEN have often dreamed of putting an end to the problem of religion. It was the dream of Lucretius: "How many crimes have been inspired by religion!" (1). The Encyclopedists thought they had done it, and in fact their influence made itself felt in every country and across every continent.

And yet there is scarcely a human being now in the world who does not experience every day in his own inner life the reverberations of a great single religious drama that has the whole planet as its theatre.

The reason why man cannot escape from the problem of religion is that for him the opposition of good and evil is an intolerable burden. Morality will not let him breathe.

An Albigensian tradition relates that the devil seduced his victims by telling them, "With God you are not free, because you may only do good. Follow me, and you will have the power to act for good or evil according to your own will." Experience confirms this tradition, for innocence is corrupted every day by the desire for knowledge and experience, far more than by the desire for pleasure.

Man has followed the devil, and has received what the devil promised him. But having gained the freedom of good or evil, he is like a child who had grasped a live coal. He wants to throw it away again, but finds it difficult.

There are three methods by which he can do it.

The first is irreligious. It consists in denying the reality of the conflict between good and evil. Our century has at-

(1) Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum. (Trans. note.)

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tempted it. Blake's dreadful words have been widely echoed among our contemporaries: " Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires."

It is not desire but rather our ultimate aim that directs action, however. The essence of a man is directed action; his thoughts and the movements of his body are only its forms. When this orientation disappears, the man becomes insane, in the literal, medical sense of the word. That is why this method, based on the idea that one thing is not intrinsically better than another, leads to madness. Although it imposes no constraints, it plunges men into a desperate boredom like that of wretches condemned to solitary confinement, whose greatest misery is having nothing to do.

Europe has fallen into this boredom since the first World War. That is why it made almost no attempt to escape the concentration camps.

In prosperity, with abundant resources, we try to evade this boredom by playing... not the games of children, who believe in their games, but the games of grown men in captivity.

But in affliction our strength is not sufficient for our needs. The problem of how to direct our energy does not even arise: man has nothing to direct except his hopes. The hopes of the afflicted cannot be made into a game. The void becomes intolerable.

The system that holds that one thing is not intrinsically better than another is rejected with horror.

That is what has happened in Europe. Nation after nation in turn has made this horrified rejection, to the extent that they have been gripped by misery.

The second method is that of idolatry. It is a religious method if one takes the word religion in the sense that the French sociologists take it, the worship of social reality under the names of various divinities. Plato compared it to the religion of a great brute.

This method consists in taking an area of society within which the idea of good and evil has no right to enter. Wherever this area extends, man is not subject to good and evil.

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This method is frequently practiced. A scientist or an artist often feels that as such he is free of all obligations, having made his science or his art into a reservation where virtue and vice do not penetrate. Likewise a soldier or a priest; which explains the ravaging of cities, and the Inquisition. In general, this art of compartmentalization has through the centuries resulted in the commission of many monstrous actions by men who did not seem to be monsters.

But the method is defective when it is partial. A scientist is not exempt from the obligations of right and wrong as a father, husband or citizen. For the deliverance to be complete, the area from which good and evil are excluded should be such that a man can enter entirely into it.

A nation can play this role. This was the case in ancient time with Rome and with Israel. As soon as a Roman had ceased in his own eyes to exist in any other capacity than his capacity of being a Roman, he was placed beyond good and evil. He was ruled only by the purely animal law of expansion. His only concern was to dominate men as an absolute master, more or less sparing those who gave way to him, and destroying those who opposed their pride to him. The means used were a matter of indifference to him, except from the point of view of their effectiveness.

A Church can also play the same role. The appearance of the Inquisition in the middle ages shows that there was doubtless a totalitarian current running through Christianity, which fortunately did not carry it off. Perhaps, hovever, it caused the miscarriage of the Christian civilization that the middle ages seemed on the point of producing.

In our times nations alone exercise this function; not directly, but through the intermediary of a Party and the organizations that surround it. In one-party countries the party member who has once and for all abdicated all other capacities is no longer subject to sin. He may be clumsy, in the manner of a servant who drops a plate, but whatever he does he can do no wrong, since he is exclusively a member of a group—the Party or the Nation—that can do no wrong.

He only loses this protection, this armor, if he suddenly

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turns back into a being of flesh and blood, or a being that has a soul; in brief something other than a particle of this group. But the privilege of being liberated from good and evil is so precious that many men and women who have chosen once and for all remain inflexible in the face of love, friendship, physical suffering and death.

It is costly to them, and one should not be surprised that conversely they take pleasure in torturing the weak. They need to prove experimentally to themselves the reality of that absolute licence for the privilege of which they have paid so dearly.

Just as indifference to good or evil, such an ideology leads to a kind of insanity; but a very different kind. Germany contracted the first to a greater degree than any country in Europe, and her reaction from it was proportionately violent. But in plunging herself with despair back into the second of these two forms of insanity she still retained much of the first. Their combination produced what has been for several years the horror and dread of the world.

Still, we must not fail to recognize that for all of us, people of the twentieth century, Germany is a mirror. What we find there so hideous are our own features, merely exaggerated. This thought should by no means weaken our vigor in the fight; quite the contrary.

Idolatry is degrading; fortunately it is also precarious, since the idol itself is perishable. Rome ended by being plundered and enslaved in its own turn. Folklore is full of stories of giants whom no one can harm because they have hidden their soul in an egg which is in a fish which is in a distant lake guarded by dragons. But one day a young man discovers the secret, breaks the egg and kills the giant. The giant had committed the imprudence of hiding his soul somewhere on this earth, in this world. A young S. S. trooper commits the same imprudence. To be secure one must hide one's soul elsewhere.

The art of doing so constitutes the third method, which is mysticism. Mysticism is the passage beyond the sphere where good and evil are in opposition, through the union of

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the soul with absolute good. Absolute good is another thing from the good that is the opposite and the correlative, of evil, though it is its model and principle.

Such a union is a real transformation. Just as a girl who has had a husband or a lover is no longer a virgin, so the soul that has experienced such a union is changed for ever.

It is a transformation that is the opposite of the one that has taken place when men have followed the devil. In consequence it is a difficult and even impossible action, contrary to the law of the degradation of energy, even more so than the transformation of heat into motion. But the impossible is possible for God. In one sense, indeed, only the impossible is possible for God. The possible he has abandoned to the mechanisms of matter and the free will of his creatures. The procedures and effects of this transformation were studied experimentally in the most minute fashion by the Egyptians, the Greeks, the Chinese and probably many others in antiquity, and in the middle ages by many Buddhist sects and by the Moslems and the Christians; but for many centuries these things have been more or less forgotten in all countries.

The very nature of such a transformation prevents one from hoping to see it accomplished by a whole people. But the entire life of a whole people may be impregnated by a religion completely oriented toward mysticism. Only this orientation distinguishes religion from idolatry.

The French school of sociologists is almost right in its social explanation of religion. By an infinitely small amount does it fall short of the truth. But this infinite smallness is the grain of mustard-seed, the pearl in the field (1), the leaven in the dough, the salt in the repast: this infinite smallness is God; that is to say, infinitely more than all.

In the life of a people as in the life of a soul, it is entirely a question of putting this infinite smallness in the center of things. All that does not have contact with it directly should have it by being impregnated through the intermediary of

(1) The author mixes two parables from consecutive verses of Matthew 13: the treasure found in a field and the pearl of great price.

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beauty. That is what was almost brought about by the Roman middle age, that prodigious period when every day the eyes and ears of men were overwhelmed by beauty perfectly simple and pure.

The difference is infinitely small between a system of labor that opens the beauty of the world to men and another that closes it out, but this infinite smallness is real; where it is lacking nothing imaginary can replace it.

Always and everywhere, if one may use such words to sum up, right until recent times, the system of labor has been corporative. Such institutions as slavery, bond-service and the proletariat added themselves to the corporative organization like a cancer to an organ of the body. For several centuries now the cancer has replaced the organ.

When fascism exalts the corporate formula it is with the same sincerety as when it talks of peace. Nothing in what is today called corporatism, by the way, has anything at all in common with the old guilds. Anti-fascism, too may adopt the formula and behind this blind fall into a totalitarian form of state capitalism. A real corporate system will not grow in a *milieu* that is not prepared for it spiritually.

Affliction fell on Germany in the form of economic crisis; it pushed it violently out of the void of indifference into a frenzy of idolatry. Affliction fell on France, however, in the form of conquest. National idolatry is not possible for a subjected people.

None of the three methods of freeing oneself from the opposition of good and evil is available to slaves or subject people. Every day, on the other hand, exterior evil enters into them through misery and humiliation, and arouses inner evil in the form of fear or hate. They can neither forget evil nor deliver themselves from it, and thus live in the closest earthly approximation of hell.

But the three methods are not of equal inaccessibility. Two are impossible, but the supernatural one is only difficult. There is no approach to it save through being poor in spirit. Just as being poor in spirit is indispensable to the rich to keep from them the defilement of riches, it is indispensable to

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the afflicted to keep them from going to pieces in their misery. It is equally hard for both. Enslaved and oppressed Europe will not see better days when it is liberated unless in the meanwhile the virtue of being poor in spirit has taken root there.

In regard to civilisation, the masses are not creative unless inspired by an authentic elite. Today it is necessary that an authentic elite kindle among the masses of the unfortunate the virtue of being poor in spirit. For that, it is first necessary that the members of this elite be themselves poor, not only in spirit but in fact. Every day they must undergo the sorrows and humiliations of misery both in soul and body.

A new Franciscan Order is not what is needed. Brown cowl and monastery are a separation. These people should be in the mass and touch it without having anything between it and them. And, what is more difficult than bearing hardship, they should not let themselves receive any reward; in their relationship with the masses around them they should sincerely practice the same humility that a naturalized citizen does toward the people of the land that has received him.

If one had understood that this war was going to be a drama of religion one could have foretold many years ago which countries would be the actors and which the passive victims. The nations that lived without religion could only be the passive victims, as was the case of almost all of Europe. But Germany lived in idolatry. Russia lived in another idolatry, beneath which may yet tremble some remnants of an abjured past. And though England is wasted by the illness of the century, there is such a continuity in the history of this country, such vital power in its tradition, that some roots still draw sustenance from a past bathed in mystic light.

There was a moment when England found itself facing Germany like an empty-handed child before a thug brandishing a revolver in each hand. In this situation a child cannot do much, but if he looks the thug coldly in the eyes surely the thug will hesitate a few moments.

That is what happened. Germany, to hide this hesitation

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from itself, to give itself an alibi, threw itself on Russia and thus destroyed the best of its forces. The torrents of blood shed by the Russian soldiers almost made one forget what had gone before, but that moment of England's unmoving silence is even worthier of undying memory. The German armies' halt at the Channel was the true part of the supernatural in this war. As always, a negative part, imperceptible, infinitely small, and decisive. The waves of the sea go far, but something halts them... the ancients knew that it is God that assigns a limit.

There was a time when every wall in France was covered with posters saying, "We'll win because we're strongest." (1). That was the silliest slogan of this war. The decisive moment was the one when our strength was almost nil. The forces of the enemy halted because force, not being divine, is subject to a limit.

The war has reached out to other continents. The idolatry that animates Japan is perhaps still more violent than that of any other people. Democratic faith is still alive in the United States, although in France, for example, it was almost dead even before the war... even before Munich. But our time is one of idolatry and of faith, not one of simple belief. For America the war is still new and is made less real by distance, but under its impact, however brief it may be, it is almost certain that profound changes will come about.

Europe remains the center of the tragedy. Of the fire thrown to earth by Christ, perhaps the same as the fire of Prometheus, some burning embers are still alive in England. That has been enough to prevent the worst from happening, but we have only gained a respite. We will still be lost if from these embers and the few sparks that glimmer on the continent the flame does not arise that can illumine Europe.

If we are delivered only by the money and the factories of America we will in one way or another fall back into another servitude the equivalent of the one that we are undergoing. We must not forget that Europe has not been subjugated by hordes that came from another continent or from the planet

(1) "Nous vaincrons parce que nous sommes les plus forts."

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Mars, whom it would be sufficient to drive away. Europe is suffering from an internal illness. It is in need of a cure.

It cannot live unless it is delivered at least in large part by its own efforts. It cannot, fortunately, have recourse to an idolatry to oppose to that of the conquerors, because enslaved nations cannot become idols. Subject lands can oppose only religion to their conqueror.

If faith surged up in this unhappy continent, victory would be quick, sure, and solid. It is obvious even on the basis of strategy: our lines of communication are on sea, and we must defend them against submarines. The communications of the enemy run among oppressed populations, and would become untenable if the fire of a true faith spread through all that territory.

But the resurgence of a true faith cannot be prepared with descriptions of the latest bombers, or production-figures, or promises of clothes or food. For the afflicted there is only one road to faith, the virtue of being poor in spirit. But that is a hidden truth, because at first glance being poor in spirit resembles the acceptance of slavery. In fact they are identical down to an infinitely small degree... that same infinitely small that is infinitely more than all.

Misery does not by itself teach men to be poor in spirit, but it is almost their one opportunity of apprenticeship. Though far less fleeting than happiness it does pass away, and one must make haste to profit from it.

Will the present opportunity be taken advantage of? This problem may be of greater military importance than strategic plans, and of greater economic importance than statistics and maps of partitions. Hitler has taught us, if we are capable of learning it, how a truly realistic policy seeks above all to take thoughts into account.

His stake is on evil; his working-material, his dough, is the mass. Our stake is on good; our working-material is the yeast. Our ways of action should differ accordingly.

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THE SNOW QUEEN

Child with a chip of mirror in his eye
Saw the world ugly, fled to plains of ice
Where beauty was the Snow Queen's promises.
Under my lids a splinter sharp as his
Has made me wish you lying dead
Whose image digs the needle deeper still.

In the deceptive province of my birth
I have seen yes turn no, the saints descend,
Their sacred faces twisted into smiles,
The stars gone lechering, the village spring
Gush mud and toads—all miracles
Befitting an incalculable age.

To love a human face was to discover
The cracks of paint and varnish on the brow,
Soon to distrust all impulses of flesh
That strews its sawdust on the chamber floor,
While at the window peer two crones
Who once were Juliet and Jessica.

No matter, since I kept a little while
One thing intact from that perversity—
While landscapes bloomed in monstrous cubes and coils.
In you belonged simplicities of light
To cool the vision, teach the air
To shine, the stars to find their way again.

Yet here the Snow Queen's cold prodigious will
Commands me, and your face has lost its power,
Dissolving to its opposite like the rest.
Under my ribs a diamond splinter now
Sticks, and is rooted; only you
Deny the frozen spear that drives me through.

—Adrienne Cecile Rich.

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BLAIR FULLER

MARKLE AND THE MOUSE

MARKLE followed Ernie down the ladder to the liberty launch and they elbowed through their crowded shipmates to the starboard combing. They faced outboard, staring across Subic Bay at the navy yard's white buildings which wriggled in the heat and at the thickly jungled hills beyond. At an order, the cast-off lines thumped on the floorboards behind them; the launch reared back as the motor roared.

Markle said quietly, "Easiest thing you ever did, wasn't it?"

"Just about," Ernie said. "I was nervous but now I wouldn't care if they hung me when we get back."

"I knew they wouldn't check the liberty list," said Markle. "They never do... and I got Gourley's beer chits, so everything's smooth."

The vibration of the launch seemed the only movement on the calm of the water. As they neared shore the tall palm trunks stood out of the shade and the beach was powder white under the sun. Two boats from other ships were already tied at the landing.

"Hey, Ernie."

Markle turned to see big Shafe, the coxswain, tapping Ernie's shoulder. Two men from the deck force stood beside him. "Ernie," Shafe said. "Ain't you kinda young to be drinking beer?"

"I don't think so," Ernie said.

"It seemed to me your Daddy and your Ma mightn't like it if they knew you was drinking beer."

"They don't mind, Shafe."

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"What do *you* want?" Markle spoke loudly over the motor's noise, but Shafe did not answer. He stuck his hands in his hip pockets and his gold earring swayed and glittered. He continued, "I'm not certain you oughta be on this boat, Ernie."

Markle interrupted him again. "That's none of your business, Shafe."

"Mark," said Shafe, turning quickly, "you're gettin' *big* since you're first class flags, now ain't you? Pretty big since they give you three stripes and this kid to boss. Recollect, Mark: I can talk pretty loud sometimes."

"It wouldn't be worth your while," said Markle. "I can put you on report anytime I want."

Shafe moved slowly from heel to toe, first his gut then his face close to Markle. "You report me and I'd advise you not to walk alone too often. That's the way I'd advise you."

"I'd advise you not to get grabby with the kid's beer chits, Shafe. Lay off him."

Shafe spat over the combing. "I believe maybe right now you and the kid are alone too often. I wouldn't stay up late, neither."

Markle cursed him. Ernie had not moved. His face was solemn as the two deck hands leaned close to Shafe and the three talked. Then Shafe shrugged and moved off. "Don't let that deck monkey scare you," Markle said. "There's a lot around like him. He's phony, he's scareder than you are."

At the pier the men scrambled over the side and hurried toward the recreation area. Back from the beach beneath the trees were tables and benches on a concrete floor, and in the nearest Quonset was a window where the men drew their beer ration—six cans each. Ernie and Markle got their twelve—Ernie's on Gourley's chits—and they carried them towards the tables. Small crowds had collected, and Markle and Ernie stopped at the first table where Shafe was standing next to a sailor with four pairs of dice in front of him. "What do you cut?" Shafe was asking.

"One out of six," the sailor said. "Nothing on side bets."

Shafe whistled and Markle shook his head.

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"Do better," the sailor said. "Look around."

As he and Ernie walked away, Markle said, "Maybe a few side bets later on, but one out of six! Jesus!"

At the end of the next table they found room and sat down. They opened their first beers and in big successive gulps drank half before they put them down. Down the area a basketball game had started in an open court. A few had stripped off their clothes and were swimming; and far out beyond them the DE 104 lay slim and pretty, spotless in the distance.

They drank their second round, pouring the beer into paper cups stacked on the table. The thirds they treated as casually as their cigarettes.

His third cup empty, Markle left the table. Beyond the concrete, four urinals, vertical pipes with funnels slanted from their tops, were arranged in a cluster like loud-speakers. Standing there, his sight strayed through the trees to the open fields, and beyond them to the Philippine village which had been off-limits since the peace.

Then, at the base of a tree some ten yards away, he noticed a mouse nestled among the roots. He buttoned up and moved slowly towards the mouse, stalking it. The mouse was still. Markle stopped within arm's length, cupped his hands, and bent at the knees. In one quick fall of the hands the mouse was caught.

"What you got there, Mark?"

"Where'd you find him?"

Markle went to the table. The mouse wriggled and tried to scratch until Ernie took it and stroked its head, gently tracing the delicate ears.

"I always did like mice," Ernie said. "I used to have a couple of white ones."

"Cute little bugger," Markle said. "Used to like them myself. I wonder is it true they can give you disease."

"Yeah," said another man. "I wouldn't fool with him like that."

"Lemme see him," said Shafe's voice.

"What do you want with him?" Markle asked.

"I ain't gonna hurt him."

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"You won't hold him right," Ernie said.

"What way do you think I'll hold him—in my teeth?"

Ernie took one of the paper cups from the stack and gently put the mouse in it. "This way you can all have a look," he said, and gave the cup to Shafe.

Shafe looked a moment, then passed the cup on. Some put their fingers in to see if the mouse would nibble, and some tried to stroke its head. Even the dice games lost customers to the hunched and bright-eyed animal. When the cup had gone full circle, Shafe took it again and held it close to his chest, peering down at it. "I got a idea," he said. "I got a helluva idea."

"What kind of idea?" Markle said.

Shafe started away from the table toward the far end of the concrete.

"What *kind* of idea?" Ernie shouted. He and Markle jumped up and followed, pushing ahead through the others. At the edge of the floor, Shafe stopped and held up his hand.

"Men," he yelled, "you come on with me and we'll have us the best and biggest gamblin' game ever's been in Subic. Can you load a mouse? I ask, can you load a mouse? And I ain't cuttin' one for six, neither. Now come on, we'll find us a place to have it."

"Give me that mouse," said Ernie. "Give me that damned mouse."

Shafe held the cup above his head with one arm and Ernie from him with the other. "Now lookit here," he said to Ernie, "I ain't gonna hurt your damn mouse, you come along and see. And I'll give him back to you, once the game's done."

"Give it me, Shafe."

"Ah, hell," said Markle, "let him keep it. If it looks like he'll hurt him, we'll take him back."

Shafe already was walking down the area, the crowd close after him. They passed the basketball court and the swimmers before Shafe found a piece of flat ground he said was big enough. It lay back from the beach between the scattered palms. Shafe took a marlinspike from his belt and drew a

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small circle in the loose ground. Then, cursing the crowd to give room, he drew lines outward from the little circle, pie-cut lines, eight of them, all around the compass, and drew a big circle at their ends. "Choose your cut!" he yelled. "And lay your bets. Which way does he go? Which way's the mouse gonna run?"

The men spread out around the circle, digging for money in their pockets.

Markle stood at the edge of the big circle, Ernie just behind him.

Shafe yelled, "You get the odds of the board, seven to one on what you bet. Winner pays me deucer. O.K? Well, lay 'em down boys, lay 'em right on down."

Markle laid two dollars and there were three other bets in the same cut. He said to Ernie, "Why don't you play the next cut and we'll split, win or lose."

"I'm not going to bet."

"Why not? Not bad odds."

"No, I won't bet."

When the bets were laid, Shafe moved them back from the line. "Shut your mouths," he said, "or this mouse won't never get out. You ready?" And he shook the cup, turned it upside down in the little circle, and walked away.

The mouse was motionless a moment and then began to scurry, away from the center but in various directions. Voices all around the circle urged it to them. Behind the sweat-drenched men, Shafe dodged, following the mouse's direction. The mouse came within an inch of winning for the cut directly opposite Markle's, then ran to the right, then finally crossed the line. Shafe pushed through the crowd, jammed the cup down, and poked the mouse into it from below. He set the cup in the center of the circle and collected and paid off the bets. Only a dollar and a half had been laid on the winning cut. Shafe must have made twenty.

He said, "An' this mouse gonna run some more. You can see my mouse ain't loaded, cain't you? Well, choose your cut and lay your money!"

No one left the circle and more were coming to it from the

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beer garden. The men were two or three deep all around.

Markle bet another two dollars. "Come on and bet," he said to Ernie.

"He's going to hurt that mouse."

"Ah, *hell*," said Markle, "he's all right."

Shafe shook the cup for the second game and up-ended it with a flourish. The mouse's coat was scuffled and sandy and when he moved he was less quick on his paws. He scurried, then sat a while, scurried, paused, and finally ruffled the line near the point of his first crossing. But this time he had crossed so close to a pie-line it was doubtful who had won. The men rushed forward to look at the tracks before Shafe had cupped the mouse, and for a minute the animal was lost among the feet.

"Christ! Did I hurt him?"

"Naw," said Shafe, "it's a real tough bugger, this mouse." He named the winners, collected, paid, and spieled for the third game.

Markle said, "It looks like they got a mouse magnet over there," but put down another two dollars.

Shafe was shaking the cup and the crowd was calling at the mouse.

"Which way does he run?" yelled Shafe. And they sang back, "Right to Poppa," and, "That mouse'll know a good man."

Shafe emptied the cup. The mouse was on its side, then wiggled upright and sat still, facing Markle. Its tufted coat was wet in patches. It sat still so long that Shafe walked out and looked at him. "He's O.K.," Shafe said. "Get hoppin', mouse." Shafe dropped a pebble near him, the mouse moved, and the crowd said, "Ah," but he had not scurried, he had pushed himself along the ground, unnaturally, as though one paw were stiff.

"Listen, Mark, that mouse—"

"Shut up. Come on, mouse, home to Poppa. Keep on pushing, mousey, push for Poppa." Markle went to one knee talking to it.

Ernie stood beside Markle, his eyes on the mouse who push-

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ed towards Markle's cut, coming to them, rolling on its side after each motion, then righting itself to push again. Close to the edge it stopped, twitched its nose, and was still. Blood was on its hindquarters and its right hind paw stuck out from its side like a half-torn match.

Ernie pushed past Markle into the circle and stepped hard on the mouse.

"You son of a bitch!" Markle shouted beside him. "You son of a bitch, we'd-a-won! We'd-a-won, you dumb bastard!"

More of the men jumped forward, but stopped, knowing the mouse was dead. There was a mumble, then a jump in the noise when Shafe got through the crowd, and then quiet when Shafe stood facing Ernie. Ernie lifted his foot and shook off the wet, almost flattened body. Rivulets of sweat rolled down Shafe's red face and his earring jiggled.

"Get him, Shafe," the crowd talked. "Fix that little bastard good."

Shafe said over his shoulder, "Hold Mark." Markle struggled but they soon had him on the ground with his arms pinned behind him.

Ernie watched them, motionless.

"You ready, kid?" asked Shafe, cocking his fists. "You all set to go?"

"Knock it out of him, Shafe. Knock his ears off. Fix that little bastard, *good*."

"You better put 'em up, kid. I ain't-a-gonna dance."

Ernie said nothing. His arms hung loosely. Shafe hit him lightly on the chest and Ernie's arms came up as he clumsily stepped backwards. The crowd was noiseless. Shafe little-stepped, wide-legged, forward. Ernie threw out his left hand; Shafe swung and Ernie again went backwards on his heels. When he had his balance, he jogged to the right.

"You ain't runnin' away, kid? You ain't got a mind to run away?"

"He ain't gettin' through here, Shafe."

Ernie came into range and was hit in the stomach. Then he clicked Shafe's jaw with a wild right arm swing, and Shafe's

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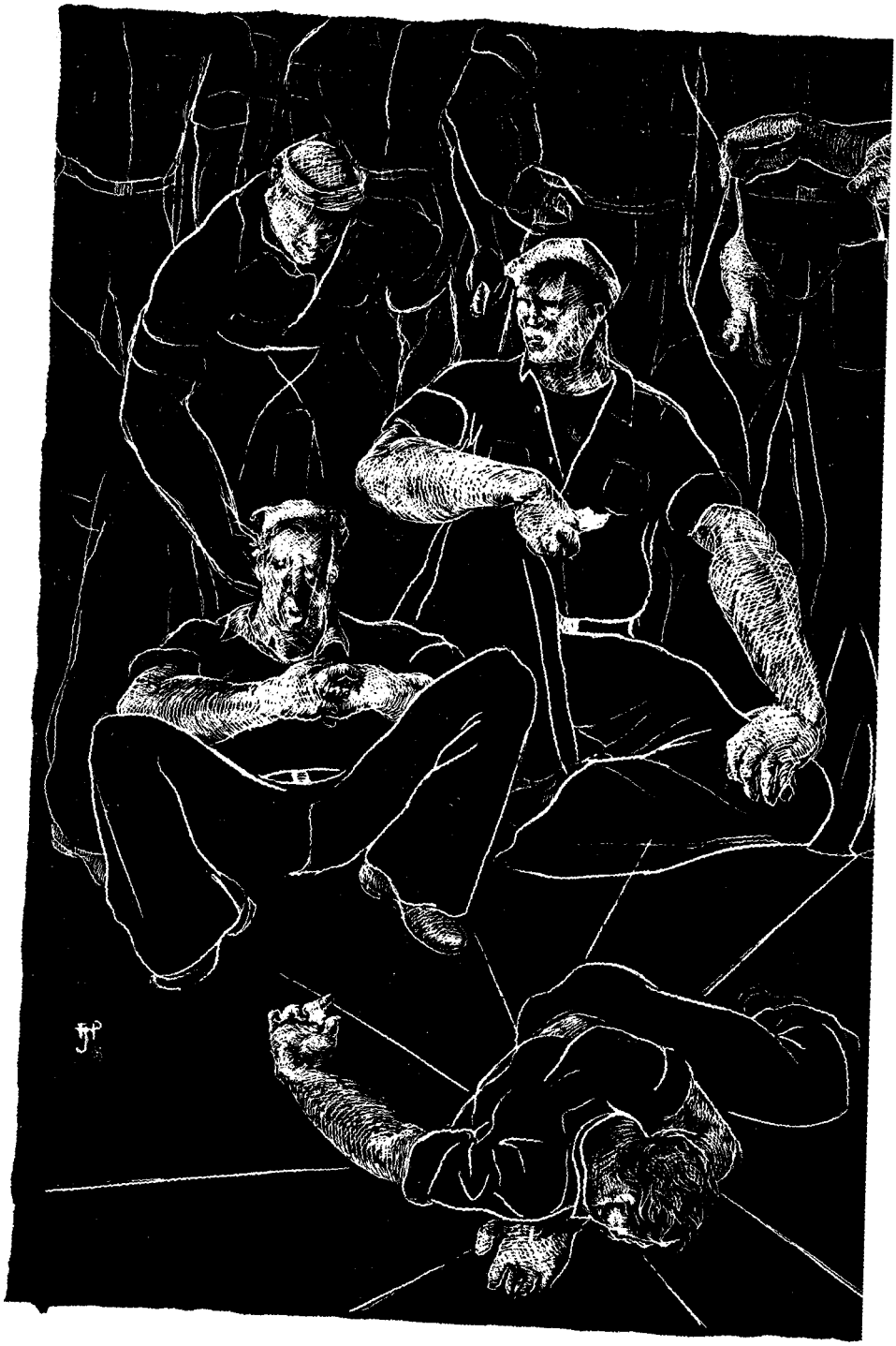

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face splotched purple. Now Shafe moved more quickly. He cuffed Ernie upright with a left, and hit him hard on the cheek. Ernie fell backward and rolled, and then came half up on his knees, his face against his forearm. His back swayed but he made no sound, no motion to rise.

Shafe walked toward him. Someone in the crowd said, "Say, that's good enough, Shafe," but the others were silent. He gripped Ernie under the arms and pulled him to his feet. Then he pushed Ernie from him with his left hand, said, "Heh!" so Ernie would lift his head, and hit him with the right. Ernie took two falling backward steps and landed loose and empty in the center of the circle. His feet splayed duckfoot, and his right arm lay askew across his chest. Blood ran from his nose and made a texture with the dirt already there.

Shafe walked to him and around him with his hands still fisted. He stopped, and looked at the quiet, uneasy men. He said, "Let go of Mark."

They released Markle and he took time getting up, shaking and rubbing his limbs. Then he stood on the line of the circle and looked at Shafe, unmarked but as openfaced as Ernie.

"Mark," said Shafe, "come on a pace."

Markle stepped toward him hang-limbed; his face was blank.

Shafe said, "I ain't gonna hurt you, Mark. I ain't-a-even gonna *touch* you."

Markle's head nodded.

"What I want from you, Mark, is you go back, take out your money, and lay it in the cut. You do that, Mark."

"Yah," Markle said, "yah." His hands fluttered towards his pockets as he backed away.

"Give him room," Shafe growled at the crowd, then, "Lay 'em down, boys, lay out all you got. Last game today. The final and deciding." He walked around Ernie. "Lay down your money and stand back from the circle." He squatted near Ernie in the center. "Which way does he go, boys?" Shafe said. "Which way will he crawl?" He was watching the crowd which chanted after him, "Which way does he go,

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boys, which way will he crawl," as they laid their bets. And kneeling by his money was Markle, expressionless, his lips moving with the chant of the others.

Then Ernie moved and Shafe stepped away from him out of the circle.

FISHERMEN

This to be peace, they think beside the river
Being adapted well to expectation
And their wives' mutiny at no achievement,
And yet can sit watching the promises
Escape through weeds and make a trial of biting,
Can lose them thankful that it is not yet
Time to draw in the line and drain the net.

Learning themselves in this uncertainty
Each hardly cares whether a fish is caught,
For here is privacy, each warns himself,
The fish, inquiries in the river, not
When drawn out promises at all
Being so solid on the bank and still.

Only the boys who live in certainty,
With expectation other than the stream,
Jeer at the patience and draw up their net
Of future frogs, the river vague to them
Until it's empty. But the old men fill
Their eyes with water, leave the river full.

—ELISABETH JENNINGS.

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EUGENE WALTER

THE BALLET

AN account of ballet in Paris since the war can only bear the simple label of chaos. But in a good sense of variety and ceaseless activity. The inexhaustible *Académie Nationale de Musique et de Danse* has stood firm amidst a welter of dance companies, smaller troupes and so forth, which have organized, some to dazzle briefly and disappear, perhaps to disband, perhaps to reappear under a different name. New designers have made their mark (one thinks of Antoni Clavé and Jean Malclès), new choreographers have appeared— including an interesting feminine one: Janine Charrat, who has created a striking *Massacre des Amazones* as well as other works for her own company. Endless successions of visiting dancers have flitted across the boards, predominantly Spanish and American, but including elements English, African, Yugoslav and Javanese. International, above all, and chaotic like all things international.

In the matter of ballet purely French in origin, there are two irreparable tragedies to consider: the death of Christian Bérard, and Yvette Chauviré's departure from the Opéra.

The French public has always required a dimension of poetry from the dance, even before that wit and intelligence which is characteristic of the French theatre generally. In seeking it they permit emotionalism and the higher forms of sentimentality; lacking it, they scorn mere technical facility. But this poetic dimension is not a readily accessible quality which can be *created* by a composer, artist, choreographer or dancer: it can only be *wooed* by them. There is a particular fall of theatrical moonlight on the painted blue-greens of those celebrated groves where the *wilis* and the *sylphides* disport

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themselves which has never been unfashionable in the French theatre, which bears no relation to anything in the world save itself, and has had its own reality since the 17th or at least the 18th century: one reason that Beaton's "blackboard" decor for the New York City Center's *Swan Lake*—so novel and pleasing to the New York taste—was found harsh and unsuitable in Paris. The Parisians appreciate also another almost indefinable atmosphere, one of theatrical gaiety quite unlike the bounce of Balanchine's *Bourrée Fantasque* danced by the American company, which seems to invite the audience onto the stage. The French do not invite the audience onto the stage.

In these perilous and mischievous arts of evocation Bérard was the supreme master: from the little Lifar ballet *La Nuit*, inserted in a Cochran revue in London, 1930, through such triumphs as *L'Ecole des Femmes*, *Rénaud et Armide*, *Seventh Symphony*, he created every time the peerless moment, and ended by giving back to the speaking theatre a poetry the ballet had never lost, by creating for the dance (in collaboration with Boris Kochno, the poet) an entirely new atmosphere, a kind of baleful modern romanticism, perverse, sad, and tender by turn. The monocled lady with the large crescent moon on her head in *Cotillon* (1932), did she not seem to murmur "Tum-te-tum, well, we shall see..." the ladies with crazy chaplets of flowers and wry-colored dresses burnt off to a crisp at the hemline, who waltzed in the scarlet ballroom of *La Symphonie Fantastique* (1936), did they not seem to say, "Away, functionalism! Away, expressionism! How German, how dull!" So that when the second act curtain of *La Folle de Chaillot* rose to reveal the Countess' grand ragpicker elegance, the entire décor could affirm a revolution and shout, "Well, the theatre *is* The Theatre, after all, is it not?"

His last creations, on synopses of Kochno and music of Henri Sauguet, who composed *La Nuit*, were *Les Forains* and *La Rencontre d'Edipe et le Sphinx* for the Roland Petit company—both of them perfect final illustrations of the Bérard-Kochno mythology. *Les Forains* is a moving episode of wandering entertainers who arrive, set up their tent, perform, fold

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up their goods and depart. *La Rencontre* is rather more disturbing: a bare plain with a low stone wall suggesting a circus ring, the Sphinx, marvellously danced by Leslie Caron, who suggested at once a pouting child and a legendary creature, after being dressed by her attendants, climbs a rope ladder to a fringed velvet platform suspended in midair by steel guy-wires. She unfolds great wings of parachute silk, and waits for Œdipus (Jean Babilée). At the end, dying after a danced duel, she climbs up to her platform again, but falls back, hanging dead, head downwards, entangled in her rope ladder. Very affecting. Interesting, too, as all Paris noted, that *La Rencontre* was created just before two of its participants went out to portentous meetings: Bérard with death, and Mlle. Caron with Hollywood.

Yvette Chauviré, just about everybody's choice as the French national ballerina (her position being much the same as Fonteyn's in England), is also an unfailing evocatrice. Petite, with a fine head and mobile face, her noble carriage and her flawless musical sense make the grand manner instinctively hers. As is always true when the grand manner is instinctive rather than acquired, Chauviré imparts to every role an air of simple rightness, a pleasurable ease that communicates itself to the audience. She shares with Danilova, Markova and Beryl Grey that gift for holding one beat of music a fraction longer than necessary, then catching up on the next, so that between two notes there is a suspension of time, the performance of a little mystery—as if time had dropped a stitch and we saw something we shouldn't. Even so familiar a program-piece as "the" *pas de deux* from *Sleeping Beauty* takes a new color when she dances it.

Chauviré is a product of the *Opéra* school. She began, aged ten, as a "rat", became a star at the creation of *Istar* in January, 1942. At the *Opéra* she danced *Coppélia*, *Le Lac des Cygnes*, *Giselle*; and a number of modern roles, among them the Shadow in *Les Mirages*, which she made unforgettably her own. In 1946, as result of a disagreement with the management, a quarrel with Lifar some say, though none will venture to say who is right, the star left the *Opéra*, her rightful frame.

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Since then she has always been seen at a disadvantage. She has taken her chances as guest artist in America (among dancers with a style completely at variance with her own), in England (with more success) in various *galas*; finally this past season organizing her own company at the Théâtre Marigny. Though choosing fine soloists—Violette Verdy, Irene Skorik, Youly Algaroff, Guy Lainé—Mlle. Chauviré's project was doomed from the start by managerial problems, insufficient repertoire, an injury to a leading dancer, and certainly a sense of disproportion felt by the public on viewing a dancer of such great presence and noble "line" in the essentially intimate Marigny. One wonders if she has thought of forgiving the *Opéra* or if they have thought of forgiving her, whichever way it should be, and settling down together again.

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Just after the war, almost spontaneously it would seem though perhaps Prince Alessandro Ruspoli's generosity was the illuminating spark which set in motion so many youthful talents alongside more established ones, a troupe took form calling itself the *Ballet des Champs-Elysées*. Already the programs for its first season take a fabled air: Kochno, Lichine, Christian Dior, Karinska, Picasso, Prévert, Kosma, Bérard, Marie Laurencin, Sauguet, Wakhévitch, Pierre Roy, Stravinsky, for example, and a formidable list of young dancers: Roland Petit, Leslie Caron, Hélène Sadovska, Youly Algaroff, Jean Babilée, Nathalie Philippart, Jean Guélis, Gérard Ohn. Add to this Renée Jeanemaire, Colette Marchand (both products of the *Opéra* school, like most of the others cited) and Nina Vryoubova, a pupil of Mme. Préobajenska, who reversed the procedure and went on to become star of the opera ballet.

In a sense, 1949 was the great year of this company: it became known as the *Roland Petit Ballet de Paris*, Renée Jeanemaire introduced the "Zizi" bob, and Colette Marchand, ravishing in black opera hose and feathers, was born of a soft-boiled egg in Stanislaus Lepri's kitchen in Hell. *L'Œuf à la*

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Coque this romp was called, and ballet fans who had admired the featured reconstruction of *La Sylphide*, so ingeniously conjured by Kochno, Bérard and Petit from 1832 prints of Taglioni and other contemporary records, were somewhat amazed at a rugby match, with oversized egg for ball, played in this same kitchen to Maurice Thiriet's jazzy rhythms; and even more taken aback by the spectacle of ladies dressed as plucked fowl (in skin-tight fleshings) having their last pin-feathers plucked out before being pushed into an enormous oven, emerging "done" to a turn in can-can costumes. "Music-hall!" they began to protest, but there was more to come. Petit's spirited *Carmen* made the name and fame of its designer Clavé and of its two principals, Petit and Jeanemaire; and even earned a kind of separate renown as "the ballet that made Mauriac pale." This must refer to the famous bedroom *pas de deux*, though what the laureat could find troubling in this frank, fulgent display of youthful physicality is a matter to be probed.

Carmen was a rich proof of Petit's kinetic invention, and was shortly followed by the amusing *Croqueuse de Diaments*, interspersed with songs, the story and lyrics invented by Raymond Quéneau. This ballet ended with a fine scene in *Les Halles* at dawn showing the reformed jewel-thief (Jeanemaire), and her virtuous young man (Petit) driving off in a flivver to find happiness in a country cottage, while the green tulle cabbages light up from within to illustrate the old French adage of happiness as "finding diamonds in cabbages." Among the young French dancers Petit and Jeanemaire have certainly the brightest talents: tremendous assurance, and a style that is *sec*, intense, and disarming.

On March 18, the *Ballets de Paris de Roland Petit* created four new ballets, three by Petit, and one by Victor Gsovsky. This last, *La Perle*, with music of Claude Pascal, was written by Louise de Vilmorin, and designed by Zao Wou Ki. A dreary little would-be Japanese affair, it had only an agreeable yellow-and-white decor to recommend it.

Ciné-Bijou, to music of Pierre Petit, in costumes and decors by René Gruau and André Beaurepaire, relates the adventures

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of a stenographer and a young man who live in imagination the adventures flickering before them on the screen of the moviehouse. Embellished with songs, and employing American popular dance idioms, this ballet has the modish and jazzy air of a successful New York revue. Two moments are unforgettable: Colette Marchand bathing in a shower of sequin dust before a backdrop of the Manhattan skyline, Colette Marchand in a pink maillot, sitting on a piano downstage center and addressing herself in song to the audience, employing her best (authentic) oo-la-la-manner.

Le Loup, the only straight ballet of the four, boasts a handsome curtain, a fine woodland decor and bright costumes by Carzou, and effective music by Henri Dutilleux, which serve to bolster the variant of Beauty and the Beast which Jean Anouilh has supplied for theme. Violette Verdy proves herself a lyric dancer of finesse and considerable dramatic power as the Bride, Petit provides himself a showy role in the Wolf, Claire Sombert creates a baleful blonde gypsy dancer.

Deuil en 24 Heures, with music by Maurice Thiriet based on turn of the century *caf' conc'* tunes, designs of Antoni Clavé, is everybody's have-fun ballet, obviously not made for those people who like their ballet to have an idea they can take home with them. Dashing at breakneck speed through five episodes in five ebullient decors one arrives at last in a purple-and-scarlet Maxim's that never existed on land (or) sea. Here Colette Marchand and company dance the tango, the waltz and the mattchiche with great élan. Petit's invention serves him best in the unpretentious and lighthearted dances of this piece.

The evening belongs to Verdy, Clavé, Carzou—and most of all, Marchand. Changing tights and feathers every five minutes, sweeping about the stage in a broad *Valse Bleue*; dancing barefoot, in high heels, or toe slippers; singing, turning cartwheels, miming, engaged in classic adagio or involved acrobatic roughhouse—her obvious relish and tireless ease are enormously engaging and justify the "de Paris" in the name of this company.

The Marquis de Cuevas' *Grand Ballet* has adopted Paris as

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its base of manoeuver since New York proved unreceptive. During Petit's absence, the de Cuevas ballet became the pet of a large portion of Paris balletomanes who find the *Opéra* ballet rather official and the ballet at the *Opéra-Comique* uninspired. Under the tutelage of John Taras the corps de ballet has developed a unity and fluidity it lacked when seen in America. There has been a steady stream of new works commissioned for this company—several from Taras, who seems still overly influenced by Balanchine, but who created a *pas de deux* of great appeal: *Tarasiana*, a showpiece to set off the virtuosity of the stars Hightower and Golovine. Marjorie Tallchief has returned to the company in magnificent form, and there are interesting soloists: Jocelyn Vollmar, Dolores Starr, Andrea Karlsen. Serge Golovine fills the stage with his vigor; Skibine Zoritch, Taras and Briansky complete a much stronger male contingent than most companies can muster. Rosella Hightower, of vigorous and impeccable style and absolute technical command, imparts great sparkle to the troupe. She is one of maybe three living ballerinas of whom one may say that she has never given a bad performance. But, but—somehow the de Cuevas ballet has never found that air of *ensemble*, that *esprit de corps* which is so satisfying in, for example, the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

Serge Lifar, the main prop of ballet at the Paris *Opéra*, has not been in good form. His frequent appearances on the scene have saddened his longtime admirers who wish he might retire from some, not all, of his roles—M. Lifar is no longer a young man. Then, two of his recent choreographic works: *Blanche-Neige et les Sept Nains* and *Les Fourberies de Scapin* have not been successful. Snow White was cursed from the first by music of a banality which would be apparent in the lowliest provincial bandstand: heard at the *Opéra* it shocks. Add this to uninspired scenery, and an involved lawsuit by a choreographer who created the original ballet, and M. Lifar must be excused for providing only a few worthwhile moments in this full evening's ballet: some fine dances for the Wicked Queen in which Nina Vyroubova makes the most of every moment. On the other hand *Les Fourberies* is not even a good

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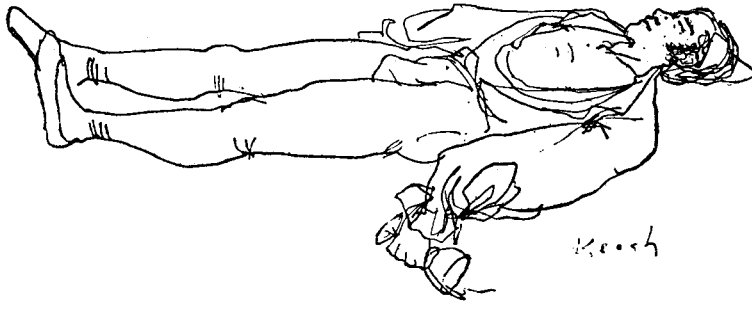
idea: a re-casting into dance form of Molière's play which is already close to a ballet; and a hasty shuffling of scraps and tags of Rossini to serve as accompaniment. The result is confused, repetitious, and very, very long. Happily, *Les Mirages* has been often performed to remind the public of Lifar's better creations.

Harald Lander, imported to Paris from the Royal Danish *Opéra*, has supplied a bright morsel called *Les Caprices de Cupidon*, a ballet rarely missing, since its creation in 1786, from the Copenhagen repertory. This divertissement, on music by Mozart's pupil Jens Lolle, recounts simply and charmingly how Cupid receives the lovers of various nations, blindfolds them and mixes them up, so that the Quakeress finds herself in the arms of a lusty Norwegian, a French coquette is carried off by a savage in plumes, and so on.

Lander, too, supplies the best dances for *Les Indes Galantes*, that irresistible 18th century funfair of singing, dancing, and carrying-on, which requires the services of some six hundred people, including seven designers, the singers and dancers, and at least one fireworks manufacturer. Clouds open to reveal goddesses, ships sink in storms at sea, perfume (mostly rose and jasmine) is sprayed over the audience as the dancers hop up out of trapdoors during a Persian Garden Party, volcanoes erupt Bengal fire and incense, plush leopards dance the minuet with Amazon ladies, and finally everybody assembles on Mt. Olympus for a Grand Chaconne: the spectator limps home, utterly exhausted and utterly refreshed.



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HENRI DE LA GRANGE

MUSIC

It is often said that the French are not a musical people. But Paris is still one of the great musical cities of Europe. It can't compete with the opera of Vienna and Milan and its orchestras are not Europe's best, but its interest and activity are tremendous. Nowhere else is musical controversy so sharp and almost nowhere else do concert audiences periodically get violent when they don't like what the orchestra is doing. Composition and performance are not necessarily better in Paris than anywhere else, but the number of orchestras, for instance, is astonishing.

The weakest side of French music is its opera. The world shortage of good voices is particularly acute in France. Although the recordings made early in the century bear witness to the excellence of French singing at that time, it now seems that French methods of vocal training, modelled on techniques of diction, do not allow the full development or preservation of the voice. These methods, well suited to French vocal music which stresses the importance of words, account for the edginess and harshness of much of the French operatic singing. Singers all over the world can no longer train their voices thoroughly before undertaking big operatic parts, but it is particularly harmful in the case of French singers whose basic vocal training is at fault.

Both of the French "national" opera houses, the *Opéra* and the *Opéra-Comique*, have much longer seasons than is normal in America. The Paris *Opéra* runs continuously and the *Opéra-Comique* closes for only one month in the year. Since the war both theatres have been placed under the same director and have employed the same singers. Their repertory is very large: excluding ballets, the *Opéra* this year has performed sixteen different works, and the *Opéra-Comique* no

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less than twenty-four. Three or four new productions are presented in each theatre every year. It is also the policy of the *Opéra* to give yearly performances of German and Italian works in the original language with an all-foreign cast. Well-known foreign singers are often invited to sing. At the *Opéra-Comique* this year, the *Barber of Seville* was revived with the young Spanish singer Maria Morales, *Madam Butterfly* with a young Japanese soprano, and Patricia Neway was heard in *Tosca.*

By far the most successful of the post-war productions in the two national opera houses are those of French works. The most spectacular operatic event since the war has been the current production of *Les Indes Galantes.* Subtitled *Ballet Héroïque en Quatre Entrées et un Prologue,* it was the second stage work by the French 18th-century composer Jean-Philippe Rameau. According to the fashion of the time, it is composed of long stretches of ballet linked together by sung episodes. The opera-ballet was a short-lived medium. However, the greatness of some of Rameau's music and the splendor of this production have made it the most widely talked-of attraction in Paris since the war. Each of the five sets was done by a different designer. Among their striking stage effects are a shipwreck and a volcanic eruption. Perhaps more appropriate for a de Mille extravaganza, these effects are not in essence contrary to Rameau's intention, for he lived at the high tide of the fascination for *mise en scène* and theatrical machinery. Although the theatres used for 18th-century opera productions were comparatively small, the very purpose of a work like *Les Indes Galantes* was to show off beautiful sets and complicated machinery. Still, while this production has been very successful, its success has not much to do with Rameau: music takes second place in this gigantic spectacle. Henri Büsser has expanded the orchestration to fill the large dimensions of the hall, and this, alas, does run contrary to the intentions of Rameau. The 18th century style of singing is lost. Even if it weren't, the intricate *roulades* which are characteristic of the music of that time cannot be sung with the required prettiness if the singer must

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be heard over a large orchestra. Often the performance is over-elaborate: the two hundred and fifty costumes used during the Inca scene rather weary the eye than gratify it. Despite these shortcomings, the production of *Les Indes Galantes* has been performed to full houses for nearly a year, and is now scheduled for a European tour.

Two operas by Honegger and one by Milhaud have been recently presented. *Bolivar* is the third of three historical operas which Milhaud wrote on South American subjects—the other being *Christophe Colomb*, given in concert form by the New York Philharmonic under Mitropoulos last November, and *Maximilien*. *Bolivar* consists of a series of scenes taken from the life of the great statesman, stylised into a series of violent and naïve images. Fernand Leger's many sets enhance certain scenes of the opera, namely the ball and the memorable crossing of the Andes. Most of the singing lies high in the voice, taxing both singer and listener. The female lead is particularly difficult, and requires an artist with a powerful and agile coloratura. Fortunately, Janine Micheau fills the requirements admirably.

The two works by Honegger now being performed in a single evening are *Antigone* and *Jeanne d'Arc au Bûcher*. *Antigone* is an experimental work written in 1923 to a somewhat dated libretto by Jean Cocteau, who is also responsible for the present sets, costumes and staging. *Antigone* is more successful than the embarassing semi-pantomime, semi-Punch-and-Judy spectacle Cocteau devised as an illustration for Stravinsky's *Œdipus Rex* during last May's twentieth century festival. All the same, the over-stylisation of both libretto and staging are typical of the post-World War I artistic tendencies which seem so dated these days. Honegger's score has some impressive moments, especially in the choruses, but his novelties of diction are awkward when not drowned by massive orchestration. *Jeanne au Bûcher* is a more effective score than *Antigone*, but a less interesting one. Though its libretto is written by the greatest living French poet, Paul Claudel, it is unfortunately one of his weakest efforts. There are two spoken parts, that of Joan, who is tied to the stake throughout,

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and a friar, who reads the events of her life from a book. The various incidents the latter recalls allow for episodes of singing and dancing; some of these show off a heavy, grotesque humor typical of Claudel. For instance, bishop *Cauchon*, who condemned Joan to death, appears throughout in the shape of a a pig—*cochon*. This sort of thing, along with apparitions of the Virgin and various saints and the repeated appearances of children who prance about the stage singing nursery rhymes is somewhat hard to take for anybody who does not share Claudel's passionate and fanatic religious outlook.

It would be merciful to ignore this winter's revival of *L'Aiglon* by Honegger and Ibert. Early in this century this Rostand play served as a vehicle for Sarah Bernhardt, but even then it could hardly have been considered a great play. Only the Napoleonic legend, which still possesses such a hold on the imagination and the hearts of the French, can allow such a stupendous combination of *papier-mâché* grandeur, cheap play on words, and tear-jerking speeches. Rostand's talents are far better revealed in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, and the revival of *L'Aiglon* does no service to his memory. Nor can anything favorable be said of the music. The first and last acts, both by Ibert, contain the best music, but perhaps this does not reflect badly on Honegger, for neither of the composers was reported to have had much enthusiasm for the revival. They had intended to write "an opera for the people." Since Beethoven wrote *The Battle of Vittoria*, many excellent authors have failed when they have consciously tried to reach the masses.

The next scheduled productions at the *Opéra* are a new *Boris Gudonov* in April and a grandiose *Oberon* of Weber in June, both in French, following the unfortunate custom of presenting all foreign works in translation.

Turning to the *Opéra-Comique*, the new production of *Tales of Hoffmann* is excellent, with a fine cast and splendid staging throughout. Gounod's *Mireille*, as well, receives a good performance. It was done for years in a disfigured version until reinstated in the repertory in its original form by Rey-

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naldo Hahn in 1939. It has a beautiful though slightly undramatic score. The new production of *Manon* also does credit to the *Opéra-Comique*. It is lively piece, and attractively staged. The sets, I think, are the best I have ever seen for this particular opera. Utrillo was called in to design new sets for the *Opéra-Comique's Louise*, an obvious manoeuver but a sensible one. The sets are not only beautiful to look at but well adapted to the requirements of the stage, and do much to set a poetic mood for the opera. This is particularly important now that passage of time has robbed *Louise* of its *verismo* flavor.

Among modern presentations, the evening called *Ravel Festival* includes the two short operas, *L'Heure Espagnole* and *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges*, and a ballet on *La Valse* with Massine choreography and Derain sets. In *L'Heure Espagnole*, staging and sets (by Suzanne Roland-Manuel) are fine, but *L'Enfant*, I fear, will always remain a disappointing stage production. Musically it is perhaps Ravel's masterpiece; the libretto shows all of Colette's inimitable qualities, her sense of the poetry of animals and things, of nature and childhood, but one feels the poetry more in reading Colette's stage instructions, which are as beautiful as the text itself.

Les Mamelles de Tirésias is the only stage work by Poulenc. It was written during this last war to a delightful play by Apollinaire. A mixture of Lewis Carroll humor and surrealism, it makes no sense at all, but has provided Poulenc with an excellent opportunity for writing some delightful pieces in a vein of parody of the gay nineties, polkas, waltzes, and so on. Such parodies sometimes appear a bit incongruous in Poulenc's instrumental music, but they are perfectly in place in *Les Mamelles*.

Flaubert's novel served as the basis for Emmanuel Bondeville's opera *Madame Bovary*. René Fauchois, who failed in the wretched libretto for Fauré's *Pénélope*, has successfully adapted the story. In his seven scenes the composer has found many occasions for expressive musical illustration of the heroine's unhappiness and downfall. Written in an ele-

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gant if a bit derivative musical idiom, this opera provides a most rewarding evening.

The newest addition to the repertory is Reynaldo Hahn's operetta *Ciboulette.* This is the first operetta presented at the *Opéra-Comique* in twenty-five years; it was composed in 1923 from a libretto by Flers and Croisset, the most famous boulevard authors of the time and the worthy successors of Offenbach's librettists Meilhac and Halévy. *Ciboulette* is French operetta at its best. The libretto and the music both parody the spirit of Second Empire—or Victorian—operetta. Reynaldo Hahn's delicate score, the delightfully unpredictable story, the lovely sets by Dignimont, and the excellence of both staging and cast all combine to make *Ciboulette* a charming expression of Parisian *esprit.*

Most important among scheduled productions at the *Opéra-Comique* is the Paris première of Stravinsky's opera *The Rake's Progress,* which will take place in June.

Among the singers who now belong to the *Opéra,* a few deserve particular mention. Geori Boué is a versatile singer, too versatile perhaps, as some of her parts are obviously beyond her scope—Ciboulette, for instance. She possesses a strong if edgy voice and her best parts are *Mireille* (in which she started her career), Marguerite (in *Faust*), *Thaïs,* and *L'Aiglon.* In *L'Aiglon* she made a success of a seemingly impossible assignment. Even those to whom the quality of her voice does not appeal will not deny the style and musicianship of her singing as well as her impeccable diction. Janine Micheau's voice is most likely the best soprano in France today but unfortunately her acting is far from satisfactory. The best actress at the *Opéra-Comique* is Denise Duval, whose fiery performances in *L'Heure Espagnole* and *Les Mamelles de Tirésias* are quite irresistible. Hers is one of the few French voices which constantly improve. Jacqueline Brumaire also shows remarkable vocal and acting talents in *Madame Bovary.* Among the younger singers, Paulette Chalanda deserves special attention. Both in *Manon* and *Les Pêcheurs des Perles,* her work shows remarkable ability and

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understanding. Among tenors, Jobin and Luccioni are past their prime but can still occasionally give a good performance. Jobin is at his best in *Contes d'Hoffmann* and Luccioni in *Samson*. Raymond Amade is a young tenor with a youthful and lovely voice wonderfully suited to his part in *Ciboulette*. Roger Bourdin is another example of the French school of singing at its best: a triumph of artistry and style over ungrateful vocal matter. Jean Borthayre is probably the best French bass of this day. His voice is sumptuous and pliable. His performance leaves much to be desired in the part of Escamillo, which lies too high for his voice, but his work in *Mireille, Lakmé* and other parts allows us to hope that he will become our only first-rate international singer capable of singing Italian opera as well as French.

A new French opera company, *L'Ensemble Lyrique de Paris*, was created this year. For its première it gave *Le Rire de Nils Halérius*, by the French composer Marcel Landowsky. The libretto was undramatic and burdened with pretentious philosophy, and the evening started badly. Mussorgsky's *The Marriage*, which followed, did not improve matters. A dramatic experiment in which the composer tried his hand at writing for the stage, it is based on a play by Gogol, and unfolds with maddening slowness its story of the mediocrity of bourgeois Russian life. *L'Ensemble Lyrique* will next present an opera by the 16th-century English composer John Blow, as well as a little-known Rossini opera. Though they have not made an auspicious start, there is certainly room in Paris for such an adventursome opera company.

Paris has five symphony orchestras, not counting the opera orchestras—the *Orchestre National*, the *Orchestre des Concerts du Conservatoire*, the Pasdeloup, Colonne, and Lamoureux orchestras. Every Sunday during the season they all perform at exactly the same hour, thus reducing the attendance at each concert and indirectly lowering the level of performances. There would be much to gain in limiting the number of the orchestras, or at least staggering their performing hours, but the French are traditionalists and most of these groups

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are over a hundred years old. In spite of the individual excellence of the players, no orchestra can give a first-class concert without a certain number of rehearsals. Only one group is allowed enough rehearsal time, the *Orchestre National*, which performs on the radio each Thursday evening, and only the *National* approaches the polish of the best foreign orchestra. In addition to symphonies, Paris possesses several chamber orchestras, the best known being the Hewitt Orchestra and *Les Concerts de Chambre* under Fernand Oubradous. There are also numerous string quartets, of which the best have already toured America and achieved a reputation there.

In composition the picture is as confused in France as elsewhere. I shall not dwell on either Honegger, Milhaud or Poulenc, as their most important works are well known abroad. Henri Sauguet is the only important composer of the four who called themselves *L'Ecole d'Arcueil* in honor of Erik Satie. He has composed the loveliest ballet scores of the post-war era: *Les Forains*, *La Rencontre*, *Les Saisons*. All show a most winning melodic invention and are well adapted to the requirements of the ballet. But Sauguet is also the serious and moving composer of the *Symphonie Expiatoire* and the *Chant d'Amour et de mort du Cornette* on a text by Rilke. In these works he reconciles a neo-romantic approach with a style that is entirely satisfying to contemporary demands.

Olivier Messiaen belongs approximately to the same generation. His works have been performed in the U. S., though less frequently than Poulenc's and Honegger's. His intelligence, technique and culture are unique. He is a renowned organist and professor as well as the composer of some twenty works, each of which shows a baffling variety of tendencies. There is no adequate description for the raving, pseudo-mystic commentaries accompanying his works. The following titles will illustrate his terminology : *Apparition of the Eternal Church*, *Three Small Liturgies of the Divine Presence*, *Visions of the Amen*. The most interesting aspect of Messiaen's music lies in his timbre effects. Though this gift is somewhat

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extraneous to music, it makes his works fascinating even to those who doubt the sincerity of his inspiration.

Like Messiaen's, André Jolivet's music has aroused a great deal of controversy. During the first performance of his piano concerto at the Strasbourg festival two years ago several young people were forcibly removed from the theatre for demonstrating clamorous disapproval. Jolivet was much under the influence of Edgar Varèse in his early life; like Messiaen, he has studied the music of the East, but unlike him he draws many effects in his music from African music. His interest in the exotic is primarily rhythmic, but like Messiaen he uses the Ondes Martenot (a French electronic instrument) and all types of percussion. His case is unique in that he alternates between "extreme" works and works which he calls "human"; these last are simple and appeal more directly to the taste of the public.

There are two other members in the group called *La Jeune France*, which like all groups of composers includes men entirely different in temperament and aims. These are Daniel-Lesur and Yves Baudrier, who have not done much experimenting but are nonetheless interesting and gifted composers.

Among the other composers of the same generation are Roland-Manuel and Henri Barraud. The former is one of the most brilliant French critics and musicologists of our day. He reveals in his music the same love of perfection as his great master Ravel. Henri Barraud, on the other hand, belongs to the serious, uncompromising, neo-classical tradition of Roussel.

In the following generation, we find Jean Françaix, the leading French pupil of Nadia Boulanger, and Henri Dutilleux. Françaix is a prodigiously gifted musician whose facility is equalled by the excellence of his craftmanship. Dutilleux is the most classically-minded of the younger French composers. His works are serious, effective and well thought out.

One of the characteristic features of French post-war musical life is the importance assumed by the twelve-tonal doctrine, mostly due to René Leibowitz, conductor, composer, critic and untiring apostle of the twelve-tone religion. Of Leibowitz's former pupils, Pierre Boulez is the strongest per-

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sonality. Though only twenty-seven years old, he has already created something of a legend. The violence of his reactions, his propensity for making public demonstrations, and the brilliant one-sidedness of his opinions have all been much discussed in the musical world here. Boulez's early studies in mathematics led him to carry twelve-tonal techniques into rhythm, a domain little explored by composers of this school. He belongs in the tradition of Webern, the "pure" twelve-tonal composer, rather than in that of Schonberg and Berg, who are romantics. Boulez's complex mind has carried him far beyond the reach of the general public.

One other school must be mentioned, that of "concrete" music. It is based on the tape recording of various combinations of sounds—bottles smashing, an airplane in a dive, an out-of-tune piano, and so forth. The main proponents of this new school are Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry. Messiaen and Boulez, who both enjoy experimentation, have shown an interest in this movement and have both produced "concrete" music.

The most important French festival was last year's *Masterpieces of the XXth Century*. Within a single month Paris was visited by three foreign opera companies, two ballets, and four symphony orchestras. The purpose of it all was to perform contemporary works and thereby demonstrate the vitality of western culture. As might be expected, there was much discussion as to whether the hundred works chosen gave a representative picture of twentieth-century music. In any case, this festival gave the Paris public an opportunity of hearing first-rate performances of unfamiliar works, and the attendance proved the success of the venture.

Many of the French provincial towns have now taken it upon themselves to set up their own music festivals. The Strasbourg festival was the first to come into existence after the war. It offers mostly concerts of symphonic and chamber music and it runs during most of June. The earliest event of the summer season is the May festival in Bordeaux, composed of ballet and concerts. The main attraction of the Aix-en-Provence festival, which occurs in July, is a series of operatic

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performances in a delightful open-air theatre built in a lovely old 18th-century courtyard. Its program usually centers around 18th-century music, which harmonizes best with the setting provided by the marvellous town. In the past two years this festival has also offered contemporary works, several of which it commissioned. Among the operas performed at Aix were four Mozart operas, Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride*, and Cimarosa's *Le Matrimonio Segreto*, with casts made up of leading singers from all over the world.

In August and September there are festivals at Menton and Besançon, which consist of a series of concerts.

One cannot always know in advance the quality of these provincial festivals, but they have an ease and charm that well reward the itinerant music-lover for the trouble of a pilgrimage.

Troupe Mexicaine — *Raoul Dufy*

(Collection Paul Prouté)

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MARCEAU & RUNACHER

By one of those delightful and seemingly inevitable proximities to which life is always party where fiction wouldn't dare, an artist with a passion for the theatre of pantomime, ballet and circus finds herself installed in a Montparnasse atelier directly above the apartment of a young man who is a famous mime and an obliging model. The artist is Suzanne Runacher who has made an enormous number of studies —sometimes six or seven of the same brief gesture, or the same sweet or sour grimace—of the mime, who is Marcel Marceau. Marceau, student of the great classical French pantomimist Etienne Decroux, began his career in 1944 in a music hall "turn" after service in the French army. When later he toured the continent, England, South America with his own troupe, all loved his clown *Bip*, his mime-drama on Gogol's *The Overcoat* (this was filmed in Germany in 1951, has just been released), his sharp new concept of Pierrot. Marceau now busily rehearses two ambitious works for his May 28 opening in Paris before going on to the Florence Festival: *Un Soir au Funambules* (music of Kosma, designs by Jacques Noel) in which he recreates Deburau, the Théâtre des Funambules, the traditional Arlequin, Columbine, le Capitaine, Polichinelle, in the Romantic Epoch pantomime as seen on the Boulevard du Crime (familiar to world audiences as background of the film *Les Enfants de Paradis*); and *Les Trois Perruques*, from an old comedy of a red-haired man who changes his character with successive changes of wig. Mlle Runacher meantime is enthusiastically busy with her pen and sketch-pad—upstairs, downstairs, and at the Comédie des Champs-Elysées.

—E. W.

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JEROME MELLQUIST

A BLURRED RETROSPECTIVE

I

Certain sentries of respectability still cannot accept Cubism. The Musée de l'Art Moderne has scoured the continents for the 231 items in its vast Cubist retrospective (1907-1914) ; it has assembled documents, photographs and architectural motifs to prove the movement's overflow into adjacent fields ; Jean Cassou penned a eulogy holding it up as the most fundamental renewal since the Renaissance ; and still the more reluctant wing of French criticism can only stiffen up and mutter that a split was generated by the movement. This touchy reference to "schisms" prompted the censorious remark that, far from being a departure, Cubism had been central to developments in our century, and that only a barnacled intelligence would insist to the contrary. Whatever the amenities in such critical rips and tears, it remains curious that the gentlemen emitting this repartee did not address themselves to the show itself, the problem of Cubism in general having been such as to demand the very best of their talents.

Admitting that the show includes two whole floors of stimulating works, that it merits many hours of examination, and that it stands as possibly the most complete Cubist resumé ever to come together on this side of the Atlantic, certain gaps and repetitions cannot be overlooked. And it was one of the younger Swiss museum-directors who first called them to my attention. The show as it stands has been relegated to alcoves designed to indicate a year-to-year progression, dates having apparently been given a primary importance. But dates, as the Swiss *regisseur* pointed out, can prevail at the expense of impact, and he would have preferred, he said, to allocate his material in such a way as to supply the shock ori-

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ginally given by the Cubist detonations. And even if dating be accepted, then once the visitor has descended the stairs to the second floor he becomes confused because many works do not conform to this classification. Perhaps this accounts for the reaction of the young painter Manessier, who averred that he found at least this part of the show "*illisible*."

Dates can hardly replace the lack of an idea, and they also can produce more befuddlement than light. Thus, though the first room provides the authentic thrill of recognition by presenting Picasso's monumental *Demoiselles d'Avignon* (from the Museum of Modern Art, New York) and by emphasizing Braques's work in the same period, these two men are placed immediately adjacent to Delaunay in the next room. Here it would seem that conflicting pictorial experiences had been conjoined, Braque's and Picasso's having implied an inward impounding of forms and a virtual restriction to the monochromatic, while Delaunay's surge outward (as it were) involves all colors of the spectrum and reflects magnificent reaches of enthusiasm. Might not the glory of Delaunay have been equally served by demonstrating fully his accomplishment as an Orphist, and allocating canvases accordingly ? Similarly, Jacques Villon and his fellow-participants in the Section d'Or not having been assembled together, this particular effort was somewhat slighted. (Villon, in fact, was altogether missing from the first floor, save for a single work committed to a corridor.) Sometimes, to be sure, the hanging made up for these slights by supplying a new emphasis to that prophetic sculptor, Duchamp-Villon, and by setting up enough sculpture to balance the paintings. Furthermore, it did manage to recall the effectiveness of Gleizes (who, by the way, expatiated lengthily on his Montparnasse Cubists as against the Montmartre group in a recent address).

Otherwise considered, the most lasting achievement of the show is that hereafter one can drop those dry and overworked munchings about the "synthetic" and "analytic" aspects of the movement. These terms, however valuable in tracing out the intricacies for the Inviolate Trinity of Picasso, Braque and Gris, have obscured the fact that other men, too, have worked,

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and that such rubrics say very little about their contribution. How, for instance, do they accredit Delaunay and his color-orchestrations; Gleizes and Metzinger, the movement's first formal theorizers; Leger, whose roof-tops and syncopated color-blocks still glisten; or Villon, who sat far back as if better to station his findings? These men, and likewise de la Fresnaye, emerge into greater prominence as a result of the exhibition—which almost overcomes one's misgivings at the chronological stress and the insufficiently elastic title.

II

Respectability's proponents might not always like the post-war developments either, particularly inasmuch as at least two of them stem from the Masters of Cubism. One, Fernand Leger, who had fled to New York upon the French collapse in 1940, would presently invent a series of *Plongeurs*, and duly exhibit them at the Germaine Seligmann Gallery on West 57th Street. Here these over-large forms, these rippling contours, these virtually interchangeable lines already predicated Leger's future efforts in mass. He further substantiated them by such projects as his mosaics for the Memorial at Bastogne and the churchfront at Assy, by his much-contested mural at the UN headquarters in New York, and in his Audincourt windows and his "Polychrome Sculpture" exhibited last February at the Louis Carré Gallery in Paris. As for the sculpture, this to the writer's mind might better have been called "Painting-in-Depth," and the largest of the works has led to endless analysis both by painters and sculptors. Apparently they think that this depth-painting in ceramic might well be applied to walls of almost infinite size, which is to say that Leger, alone of the original Cubists, had converted himself from an easel-painter into a creator for the outdoor walls of vast meeting-places or sports arenas. But Leger, even in his Cubist days, always seemed to reach as much *up* as in, and therefore this latest discovery should prompt no surprise. The Audincourt windows likewise identify him with some

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other period, either past or unborn, to which he can be more completely affiliated. These 17 sombre stained-glass celebrations depict the hands of Pilate, washing themselves clean; the Tree Earthly and the Tree Immortal; the descent from the cross; the cock crowing for Peter; the golden word "Pax," and like subjects. Leger has designated them as *Religion debout*, and as such they contrast with the more submissive offerings of Rouault and the other collaborators in the church at Assy. They revert to the days of giants hewing masonry, of Roman basilicas or pre-Gothic frescoes, of severe buttresses in the coastal towns of Leger's native Normandy. But equally well they might be welcomed by a totally different civilization.

Villon, by contrast, seems to have come up during the very shadows of the war. He, who worked with utter self-effacement during the Cubist turbulence (though sessions of the Section d'Or were held at his Puteaux studio), who long supported himself by colored etchings reproducing the work of other painters, whose strictness in the black-and-white had already won him an isolated niche before 1939,—he suddenly, upon the débâcle, segregated himself in the Tarn. There, placing his easel among the orchards and the harvest-fields, the endless scrutinizer and steadfast perfectionist suddenly flared up. His colors became illuminated and he did perhaps the best paintings of his life. These works did not go unnoticed, not merely because they surpassed his more recent productions, but chiefly because they employed a *transmissible* principle of composition. Villon, who had always called himself the "Impressionist among the Cubists," constructed his pictures by means of criss-cross lines that were almost a development of the facet-principle involved in the first Cubist pictures. Younger painters, observing these works, were inspired by them.

What emerged is history. Jean Bazaine, today perhaps the ablest French painter under 50, used those findings even when tilting and wrenching and sometimes actually suggesting an aerial view of his subject. Manessier, who had a more religious direction, utilized the "screens" of Villon, while Estève, whose color was more fruity, if the design somewhat less arresting,

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also found stimulation there. Even Pignon, whose painting eventually came to specialize in scenes from lower-class life, was not oblivious to the Master of Quietness, while Lapicque likewise has fortified his researches into optics by a periodic glance at Villon.

III

Pitched against such a perspective, a brief right-to-left inspection may be instructive. Ségonzac, long identified as a spokesman for *la douceur de vivre*, brought forth his best vintages in a vast retrospective in the Musée des Beaux-Arts of Geneva. As an etcher and illustrator his tang is still interesting, but his oils not only seem to be burdened by an integument, they reveal an inability to recharge his conceptions in the last 25 years. Dufy, who before his death garnered First Prize at the 1952 Venice Biennale, still commanded his old lightheartedness, though buttressed by a new depth since his 1941 threshing series in Normandy. His gradual deepening, and notably his discovery that black might serve as a permeable cloud amidst his other colors, was well signalized by Pierre Courthion's study, published some months ago and already superceding all others on the painter. Still another prize-winner, Gromaire, who secured a "second" at the 1952 Carnegie International, had previously added to his long and patient accomplishment by a New York series standing among the best French interpretations of Manhattan. Gromaire, incidentally, might well be taken as the *trait d'union* between more formalistic tendencies and the newsprung Social Realists, best represented, perhaps, by Fougeron, whose increasing lapse into the calendaresque is hardly compensated by his occasionally satisfactory landscapes. More independent and vociferous is Lorjou, whose be-plattered heads and strident colors, as exposed not long ago at Galerie Charpentier, suggest a pile-driver that knocks down its structure. Buffet, still working within a restricted gamut, had slightly enlarged his subject-matter in his show at Drouant-David's. His work, even his landscapes, shows a curious feeling of impoverishment.

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As for the Surrealists, a former affiliate, Lurçat, pledged almost to extinction in his retrospective at the Maison de la Pensée Française, while Wilfredo Lam, the Cuban, who persistently extracts his motifs from African Negro sculpture, may quite easily have been more exciting 15 years ago. Among the distinguished men of an earlier generation, Picasso still offered his pottery-bakings from Vallauris, amid other oven-exhibitors at the Maison de la Pensée Française, but perhaps the heat had been too much for him: generally he superimposed his patterns and the material could not speak for itself. Matisse continued to clip his paper-designs in a spirited show at Berggruen's, but such forays, touching though they are considering his illness, hardly amplify the work Alfred Barr so impressively saluted last year in his massive study.

Lanskoy once more resembled a wild cornucopia of color in his successful retrospective at Carré's. The collection of the Stuttgart Psychiatrist Dr. O. Domnick (exhibited at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels), showed a tireless capacity for further exploration:—Hans Hartung, with his scaffoldings somehow half-completed against a threatening dark; Gerard Schneider, whose curves and scorings conclude their play within a softer matrix; and Pierre Soulages, who does not neglect the joys of pigment despite the absolutes of his structure. (These three had been imported from the school of Paris.) Overloaded with lesser Teutons, the collection unfortunately omitted the strangely architectural abstractions of de Stael, nor did it include the rising Poliakoff, whose color seems to originate in a forge.

If such recapitulation suggests a growing importance for the non-representational school, it also shows that Paris still has not lost its old fondness for variety.

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Short Stories

BERNARD FRANK was born in 1929. He is one of the group of young Frenchmen associated with Jean-Paul Sartre and his literary review *les Temps Modernes*. His first book, *Geographie universelle*, from which *The Low Countries* is an extract, has just been published by *La Table Ronde*. He is now at work on a novel entitled *les Rats*. *The Low Countries* is Mr. Frank's first appearance in English.

BLAIR FULLER, a Navy veteran of World War II, has studied creative writing under Archibald MacLeish. He is working this year for an oil company in Africa. *Markle and the Mouse* is his first published short story.

PATI HILL has contributed stories and articles to *Mademoiselle*, *Town and Country*, and *Seventeen*, and has been a leading fashion model in New York and in Paris, where she now lives. She is presently at work on a novel, *The Nine Mile Circle*, a section of which will appear in the August issue of *The Paris Review*.

JAMES TOMMANEY is at present in the United States Army in Korea. *The Mother* was written while at Yale University, where he was president of *The Yale Lit*, the undergraduate literary magazine. *The Mother* is Mr. Tommaney's first published story.

Essay

SIMONE WEIL'S *l'Enracinement* has a preface by T. S. Eliot, who says in it, "I cannot conceive of anybody's agreeing with all of her views, or of not agreeing with some of them. But agreement and disagreement are secondary: what matters is to make contact with a great soul. Simone Weil was one who might have become a saint."

The present essay, *A War of Religion?*, was written in England in 1943, the year of her death at the age of thirty-three.

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Poetry

ROBERT BLY attended Harvard University where he was an editor of *The Harvard Advocate*. Two of his choral stanzas were published in the spring issue of *The Paris Review*.

RICHARD EBERHART has published five volumes of verse, including his *Selected Poems*, 1951. Educated at Dartmouth and Cambridge University, England, he is at present teaching for a year at the University of Washington, Seattle.

GEOFFREY HILL is completing his final year at Oxford University. His poems have been broadcast by the BBC and have appeared in many Oxford publications, including the Fantasy Poets pamphlet series.

ELIZABETH JENNINGS has published widely in English periodicals—*The New Statesman, World Review, Botteghe Oscure*, and others. Selections from her work are appearing in the P. E. N. anthology *New Poems* 1953, and G. S. Fraser's *Springtime*. Her first book of verse, *Poems*, has just been published by the Fantasy Press.

ADRIENNE CECILE RICH published her first book of poems, *A Change of World*, in the Yale Younger Poets Series when she was twenty-one. She is now on a Guggenheim Fellowship at Oxford. Her poems have appeared in *The New Yorker* and *the Atlantic Monthly*.

RICHARD WILBUR is spending a Harvard sabbatical year in New Mexico on a Guggenheim Fellowship. His books of verse, *the Beautiful Changes* and *Ceremony*, were published in 1947 and 1950.

Commentaries

HENRI-LOUIS DE LA GRANGE, who has published critical articles in a number of journals, is the Paris correspondent of *Opera News*.

JEROME MELLQUIST has published many critical articles on art, most recently in the Ford Foundation's *Profiles*.

EUGENE WALTER's short story Troubador was published in the first issue of *The Paris Review* and is to appear shortly in *Harper's Magazine*. His novel *The Untidy Pilgrim*, which received the Lippincott Fiction Award for 1951, is to be published this spring.

Le Gérant et la Diretrice : COLETTE DUHAMEL

Imp. J. Téqui, 3 *bis*, rue de la Sablière, Paris (France). — 20-5-1953.
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